

australian videocamera

AUSTRALIA'S ONLY DEDICATED PUBLICATION ON ALL THINGS VIDEO

ISSUE #64

Sony Cine Alta FS55 Shoots Outback for TV Show "Low Range"



Plus ...

JVC GY-HM170 4K
Panasonic HC-WXF990 4K

HitFilm 4
StreetMaps 5
Corel VideoStudio X9

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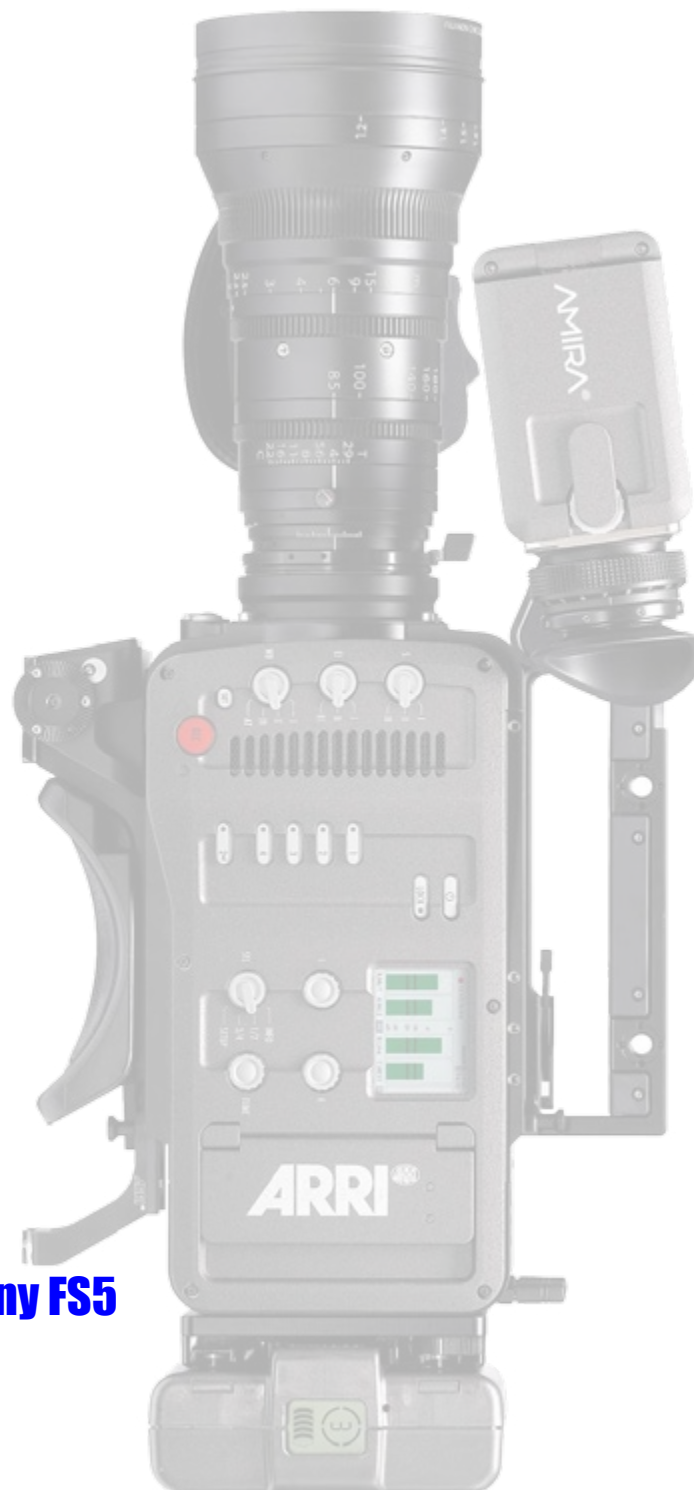
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from the editor



February has been an incredibly busy month with new camcorders and new software. Oh and we have a new look in case you hadn't noticed!

Welcome to the new look Australian Videocamera!

I decided to switch to this design as it allows a cleaner and more open look letting us use larger images and video segments. Our testing also suggests that it is now easier to read.

Up until now we have basically mirrored the older press version of an A4 page, but of course in this Brave New World of digital we are not bound by those limitations in any shape or form, allowing us to experiment with all sorts of different elements to make the publication more interactive and hopefully, more interesting.

Please let me know what you think of this new design!

February has been a very busy month with plenty of announcements, new models and new software coming to our attention. Late in the month I even had the good fortune to be flown to the **Western Plains Zoo** in Dubbo for Panasonic's latest launch. The flagship consumer camcorder **Panasonic** announced I was luckily enough to snaffle

and its first ever Australian review is right here.

I have to say this is a corker of a camcorder with all the bells and whistles including 4K. There are some serious party tricks too and I suggest when you can, have a look at one – especially if you are in the market for a new top flight camcorder.

I also got to review the pro-level 4K **JVC** GY-HM170 4K. If you are a run and gun shooter in says news gathering and current affairs, or a freelancer looking for a camcorder that is adaptable to all sorts of situations, this may just.

In software news, Frank McLeod was the first in Australia to receive **Corel VideoStudio X9**, David Smith reviews **fx-Home Hiifilm 4** and **StreetMaps 5** and I had a play with **StoryBooard Artist 7**.

Finally, we have a **feature on the making of a new TV show** showcasing Australia's outback shot on a Sony FS5.

As I said, a busy month!

As always, thanks for supporting us!

David

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E&OE





all the news that matters

Budweiser The dog brings news from all around the world that is relevant to videomakers of all types



news

Convergent Design Odyssey7Q+ to Support New Panasonic VariCam LT RAW Output

Convergent Design today announces that Odyssey monitor/recorders will support the Panasonic VariCam LT digital cinema camera's RAW file format. VariCam V-RAW is the newest format to be supported in Convergent Design's Odyssey RAW Bundle for Odyssey7Q and Odyssey7Q+ monitor/recorders along with Canon Cinema RAW, Sony FS RAW, ARRIRAW and more. The Panasonic VariCam LT, announced today, will add RAW output in a firmware upgrade from Panasonic this summer.

"The Odyssey supports RAW from more cameras than any other device in the industry," said Mike Schell, President, Convergent Design. "The VariCam LT is a great camera and an important one in the Panasonic line, and we're proud to include it in the Odyssey RAW Bundle for the Odyssey7Q and Odyssey7Q+. Odyssey will support all frame rates and resolutions available for output from the VariCam LT. In addition to our RAW record capabilities, we can integrate the Odyssey's Image Analysis Tools

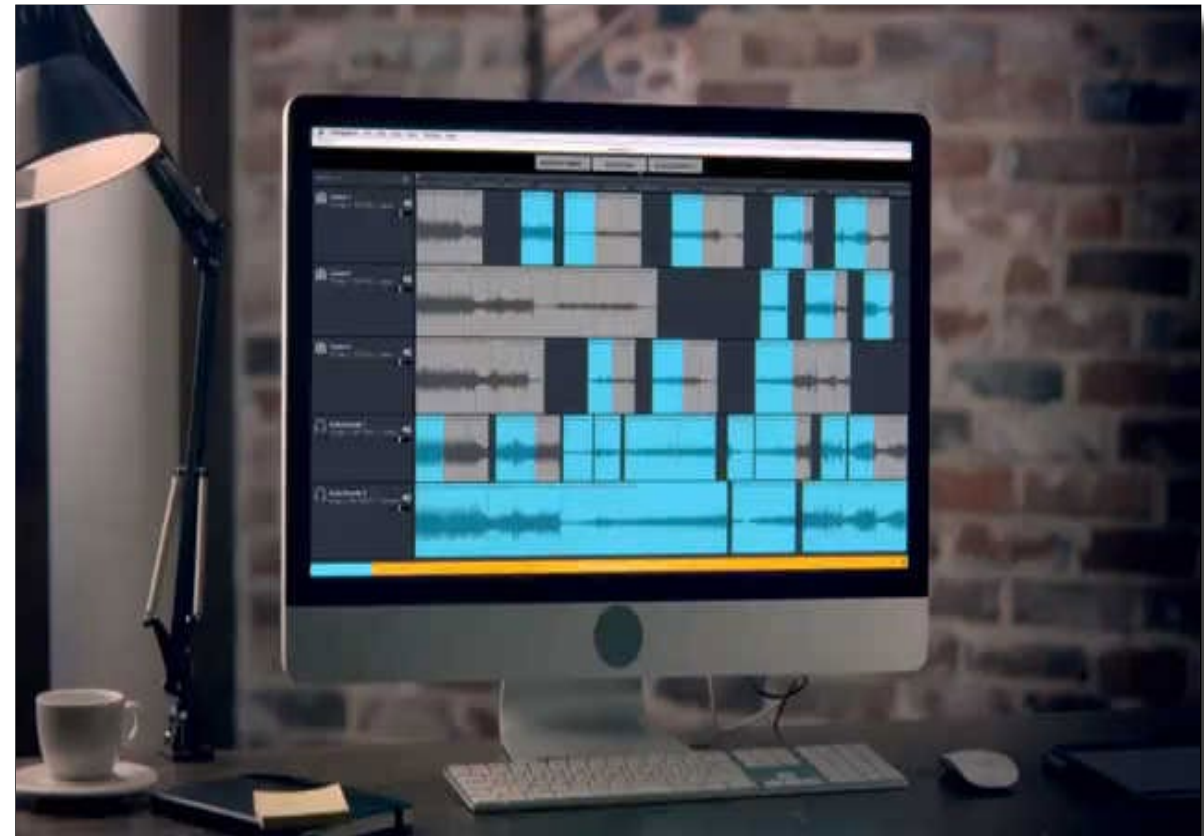
for focus, color and exposure, as well as its accurate OLED monitor and comprehensive Odyssey LUT System. Together the VariCam LT and the Odyssey make a complete professional image capture package."

[\[Click here for Odyssey RAW Bundle Info\]](#)

[\[Click here to locate your nearest reseller\]](#)

Red Giant Announces Major Update to PluralEyes in Shooter Suite 13.0 Release

Red Giant today announced the release of Shooter Suite v13.0, which features the brand new PluralEyes v4.0, the fastest, most accurate audio/video sync tool available, compatible with any Non-Linear Editor. Topping the list of new features in PluralEyes 4.0 is the ability to sync with PluralEyes directly in Premiere Pro, without having to leave the host app, Smart Start capabilities, automatic drift correction, vertical track scaling, integration with Red Giant Offload, and more simplicity and automation than ever before.



- [Red Giant Shooter Suite v13.0](#)
- [See the latest version of PluralEyes in action](#)
- [Tutorial: What's New in PluralEyes 4.0](#)
- [What's New in PluralEyes 4.0](#)

Syncing audio and video clips in PluralEyes is now easier than ever, with flawlessly synced media just a click away thanks to under the hood enhancements that allow PluralEyes to analyze footage and automatically



all the news that matters

news

choose the the best possible options, so the user doesn't have to. Sporting a completely updated look, additional new features include:

- PluralEyes now has the same keyboard shortcuts as Premiere Pro for a more intuitive, familiar timeline and playback experience.
- Vertical Track Scaling in PluralEyes 4.0 allows users to see more detail in the waveform when inspecting media.
- Users can easily compare tracks and verify the sync by selecting which audio waveform is shown next to the video track
- A new look that modernizes the application, keeping in line with the entire line of Red Giant tools.

A New Plug-in For Maxon Cinema 4D Users

MochaBlend C4D is an exciting new plug-in that converts mocha's 2D planar tracking into 3D motion - giving 3D artists innovative ways to work with tracking & roto data!

[Learn more](#)

Product Features:

Single Plane Solver: Solve camera & objects, perspective tracks & non-perspective tracks from one simple mocha track layer!

Spline to Geometry: Convert tracked roto-splines from mocha into animated geometry with depth that can interact with both

physics and particle simulations inside Cinema 4D.

Camera Solve Import: MochaBlend C4D imports mocha's camera-solve data, more easily, and with more options.

Developed by Good Spirit Graphics. Distributed by **Adimex**



Grass Valley Offers EDIUS Users Promotional Upgrade to Version 8

From February 1 through April 30, Grass Valley is offering a special upgrade promotion that enables users of EDIUS Neo (versions 1 to 3.5) or EDIUS Pro (versions 2 to 6.5) to upgrade to EDIUS Pro 8 for just USD\$349/€349, excluding local sales taxes. This program is available in all regions except Japan, where a separate upgrade program is available.

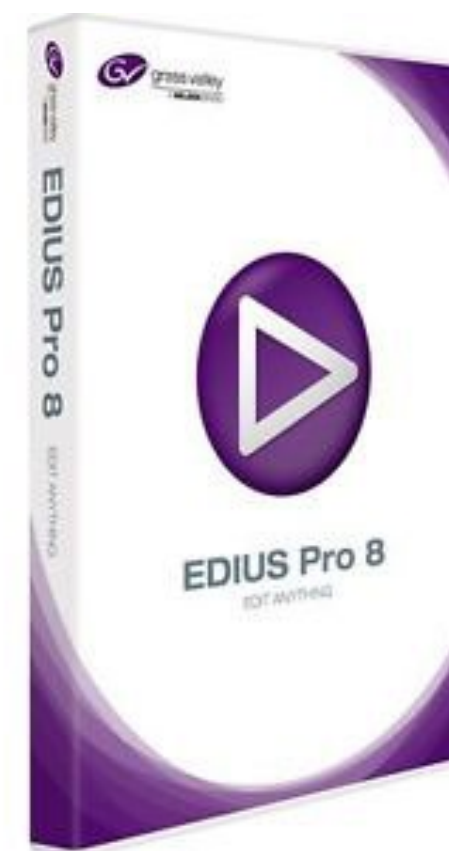
EDIUS 8 offers support for more formats and more resolutions than any other editing solution, delivering real-time editing of all popular SD, HD and 4K formats with no ren-

dering required. EDIUS 8, which boasts Windows 10 support, includes a new GV browser tool to manage video, audio and still image content on the host PC, prior to importing into EDIUS for editing. With no subscription fees, EDIUS provides free updates throughout the life of version 8.

The upgrade program for EDIUS 8 will be available through participating channel partners and will be provided in serial key format only, not as a packaged product. This promotion will also be open to those who have purchased academic versions.

For more information, visit <http://www.grassvalley.com/products/maincat-editing>.

EDIUS 8 is distributed in Australia by **Corsair Solutions**



review: panasonic hc-wxf990

The Panasonic HC-WXF990 is the latest high end consumer 4K consumer camcorder from the company. David Hague was treated to Taronga Western Plains Zoo for the launch.



Late yesterday afternoon I was asked at one of the local shops "how I was". When I answered that I was absolutely shattered and was questioned why, the reaction was priceless!

"Because I have been up 'body time' since 4:30 this morning chasing and shooting jungle animals"...

Whilst a slight embellishment of the truth, in essence it was quite correct. A 6:15am local time at the **Taronga Western Plains Zoo** in NSW saw a bunch of journos – including me - and a couple of guides lined up facing the sunrise on the savannah to attempt that elusive silhouette giraffe or elephant shot.

The event was the launch by **Panasonic-**

ic of a number of new, very sweet 4K 4/3rd mirrorless cameras, a 400mm zoom lens to suit and some new camcorders. I was armed with the

and its sibling the HC-WXF980 have had a major makeover from previous models.

Viewfinder

At last, there is now a slide able and tiltable viewfinder (EVF) with over 1.5 million dots. It is supremely clear and bright and I only came across one problem with it, which I'll give the benefit of the doubt and say may be because this was an early manufacturing issue.

You see, to turn the camcorder on, you pull the viewfinder out. When you then tilt it up as you may do when using on a tripod, this assembly locks into place. No problem.

However, I prefer the EVF to remain horizon-



very latest top-of-the-range **HC-WXF990** 4K camcorder model priced at \$1399.

And the Panasonic engineers have listened to the voices been telling them for a few years now that at this level of camera, a few things are 'must have' and so this model

review: panasonic hc-wxf990

tal and so I was forever pushing it back in again thus turning the camcorder off when shooting. The mechanism is just not 'tight' enough and the local Panasonic folk have assured me this will be passed back to the engineers in Japan. I would suggest it also needs a locking mechanism of some sort in this position.

The eyecup supplied with the HC-WXF990 is thankfully reversible as I am left eye dominant, and equally thankfully, it wasn't an arm wrestle to get it back on again as it so often is. The dioptre control is a small thumb wheel to the left and easily adjusted.

LCD

The 3 inch LCD is equally gloriously bright and sharp, and although it struggled a bit in the harsh Australian summer sunlight (temperatures there were reportedly 35-39

Celsius) it was usable. Many functions are available via touchscreen, and I'd suggest a read of the manual prior to using might be in order. I didn't have the luxury (or time) of one so had to muddle through, and some options were a little tricky to work out, necessitating in trotting over to the Panasonic product managers a couple of times to ascertain how to do such and such.

Unique to the Panasonic

ous models and it works well. **My testing use was on the pit wall at Winton Motor Raceway with the V8 Supercars.** The main lens captured the cars coming towards the camera and the secondary as they went past.

It's a very effective system under the right circumstances, but like anything else, it can be overused if you are not careful.

Main Lens

The primary lens is a beautiful F1.2 (wide) – F3.6 (tele) Leica Dicomar with an optical zoom of 20x. Shooting the wild critters at Taronga Western Plains, this was plenty long enough I found and the 5 axis level shot and for blur and tilt free shooting excellent at all but the longest lengths.

Of course shooting as we were, a tripod would generally be a must, but I was interested to know just how good it could be being hand held in the circumstances. The attached video



range is a second camera mounted on the bezel of the LCD with an F2.2 / 3.54mm lens. This can be used to take picture in picture as it has a 270 swivel facility, or create a separate stream. I have used this function on previ-

review: panasonic hc-wxf990

demonstrates this. Some shots are definitely jumpy at the extreme range they were shot at, but closer shots of the animals at around 30 metres are more than passable.

For pure curiosity's sake I also ran the same footage through ProDAD's Mercalli 2 stabiliser software and the results were then very impressive it has to be said. This video can be viewed here.

To protect the lens a lens hood is supplied and the lens cover is a built in automatic system giving piece of mind. I'd still suggest a skylight or UV filter however as a secondary level of protection.

Processor and Engine

The heart of the HC-WXF990 is a 1/2.3 inch BSI MOS sensor with 18.91 megapixels. The secondary lens has its own 1/4 inch MOS sensor with 5.27 megapixels. This is all processed by Panasonic's 4K Crystal Engine and yields truly magnificent 4K imagery that is true to colour and brightness as you can see.

The attached feeding carrots to the giraffes shows this off very effectively with the stand-

ard colour of the giraffe's fur enhanced by the rays of the rising sun.

During this shoot I kept the camcorder on AutoFocus as we really didn't have the time to come to grips with the

nuances of such things in manual mode, and I found it to be very fast indeed. I noticed no discernible "hunting". This of course is critical to not just good 4K footage,

you can add zooming, panning, tracking and stabilising all in the camera in the field if necessary. The high definition of 4K and sharp detail are all retained.

Of course it also a given that the odds on your next TV will be 4K are almost 100% and then you really can realise the best of the HC-WXF990.



When in 4K still mode, you can likewise extract high resolution still images choosing from streams of 30 frames a second to get just the right shot taken during the interval the shutter

but also when you may have the camera in HD mode – although I am not sure why you would ever frankly.

4K Cropping

Immediately I hear a babbling of people saying "what's the point without a 4K device for playback?"

Well even 4K down sampled to HD shows remarkable improvements in my opinion, but apart from that, the HC-WXF990 has a rather neat party trick you see.

This is called 4K cropping and allows you to pull sections of 4K video out in HD, internally in the camera without the need for post-editing as you would in the past. This means

but -

ton is held down.

Effects that are built into the HC-WXF990 include slow and quick video, slow zoom and dolly zoom. Creative functions are miniature effect, silent movie, 8mm movie and time lapse. Personally I prefer to these things on the desktop after the fact. But it's nice to know they are there if needed.

Storage

The HC-WXF990 has 64GB of inbuilt memory and twin SD card slots for hi-speed 32GB or 64GB SD cards. I found that 64GB of the main



review: panasonic hc-wxf990

memory was good for approximately two hours of 4K footage.

Wireless

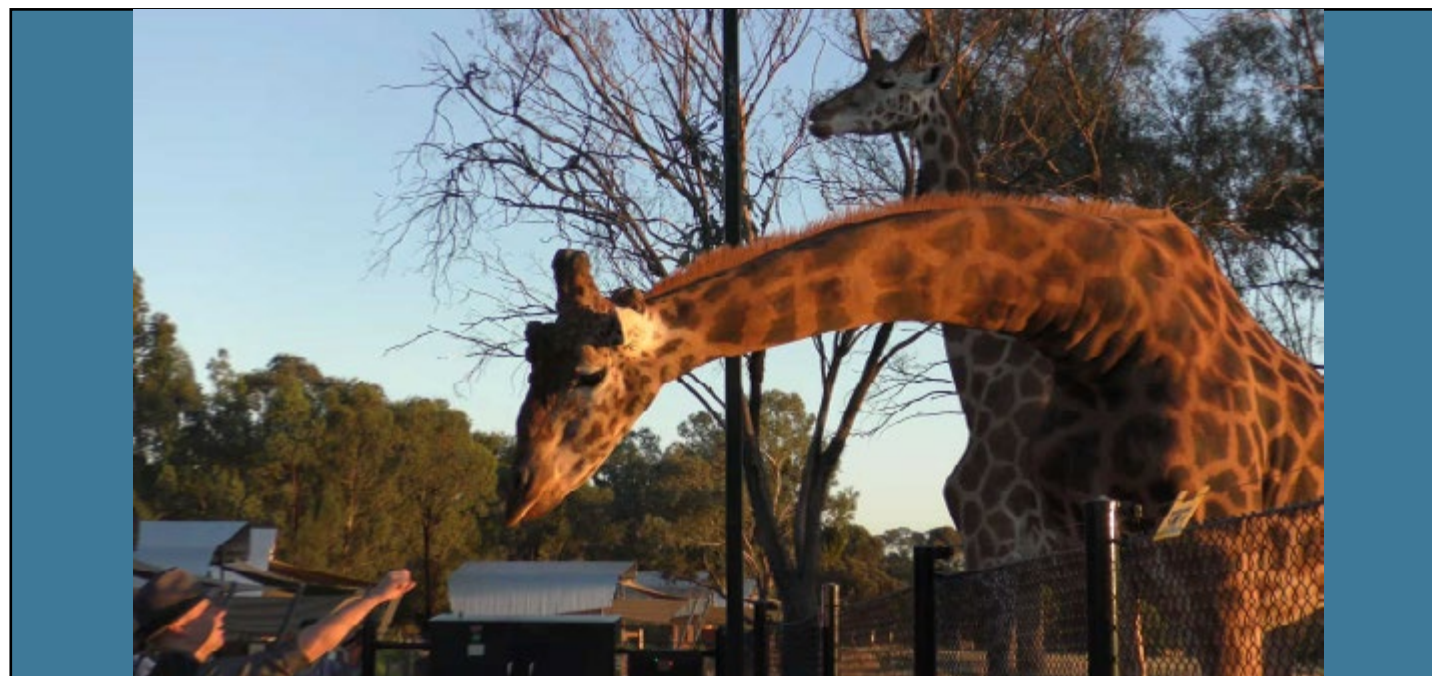
Wi-Fi is ubiquitous today and so yes, Wi-Fi is available. It however goes one step further than expected to simply remotely control the HC-WXF990. As this camera has the twin camera capability, the smartphone can actually become the second camera, shooting externally to the main camera. In fact, up to three smart phones can be linked thus opening all sorts of creative possibilities.

Controls

OK let's forget the clever things and get back to basics. It's all very well having these magic tools at hand, but a serious camera also allows serious manual as well as automatic control.

The HC-WXF990 doesn't fall short there. The menu system is easily accessed on screen and the various options set as you wish. Additionally, quick access can be gained on-the-fly via a forward mounted camera function knurled knob. This means the LCD doesn't need to be opened.

In short, the person who likes their shooting to totally manually managed, can rest easy.



Click above to play video

These people also like to have headphone access and external mic ports and these are available as well as USB and HDMI.

Conclusion

It may seem that I have nothing with which to fault this camcorder, apart from the aforementioned issue with the slide able EVF, and in general I don't. There are a couple of things that you may or not care about, but I did find one a tad annoying, and just a small thing I feel would enhance this camera.

The "annoying" is the small writing designating what a button or other control does. Like many, I wear different glasses for reading and generally don't have these on me when out and about. This is not aided by the grey colour of the writing which on a black background badly contrasted. If the labels were in a brighter white, that would

be a great improvement in legibility.

I found the camera a little on the light side. At a smidgin over 400g it is certainly no behemoth, and for stability in handheld shooting, I'd prefer another 100g or so just to add some more solidness.

I admit though in the overall scheme of things are certainly not deal breakers, because the quality of the imagery the HC-WXF990 spits out quickly overrides these nags.

I generally refuse to cliché such things as say stuff like "raises the bar" or "is a game changer". And I won't here. Suffice to say the Panasonic engineers have produced a bloody good camcorder at this price point of \$1399.

See www.panasonic.com.au for more info.





review: jvc gy-hm170e

Small, lightweight, with lots of grunt. And 4K to boot! What's not to like asks David Hague



With the GY-HM170, JVC has plonked this camera fairly in to the camp of Canon's XA series of run 'n' gun models – with one major difference. The GY-HM170 is 4K as well as supporting 4:2:2 Full HD at 50Mbps.

In fact, the small size of this model disguises the amount of grunt contained under the bonnet.

The Technical Stuff

Starting at the front, the HM170 has an integrated 12x F1.2-3.5 optical zoom lens (in other in 35mm parlance, equivalent to 29.5mm to 354mm) gathering light for a 4K CMOS sensor with 12 megapixels. A two position ND filter is activated by a switch on the side of the lens. Above this is a push button focus assist.

4K recording is captured at 150 Mbps, and there are two SD cards slots allowing simultaneous recording as well as relay record-

ing. The slots are also hot swap-able. Proxy files can be recorded as well full HD. A file recorded in the 960 x 540 mode is approximately 1/10th the size of a full HD file recorded at 35 Mbps. This is a bonus for those who transfer files to the web.

In Full HD model, files are recorded to the Quicktime MOV format making them compatible with a wide range of NLE's. I ingested into Sony Vegas Pro, Adobe Premiere,

and After Effects with no issues.

Additionally, via the inbuilt HDMI port, you can connect a 4K monitor to the HM170 and view the live recording or playback what is already stored in the camera.

As well as a two ring lens, there is a knurled Iris control on the left of the camera, where the majority of the controls incidentally are. Along the bottom edge are switches and buttons for Gain, White Balance, OIS, AE level and shutter speed.

The flip out 3.5" LCD is 920K and it along with the 1.56 Megapixel extend and tiltable Viewfinder both support focus assist. The LCD screen is (thankfully) not a touch screen, and instead has a small 4 way arrow position with a central Set button to choose commands from the menu system – which we found very intuitive and easy to setup. One thing we did notice is there is no battery meter as such, instead





review: jvc gy-hm170e

on the LCD is a number showing "time left".

For customisation there are nine user button assignable functions.

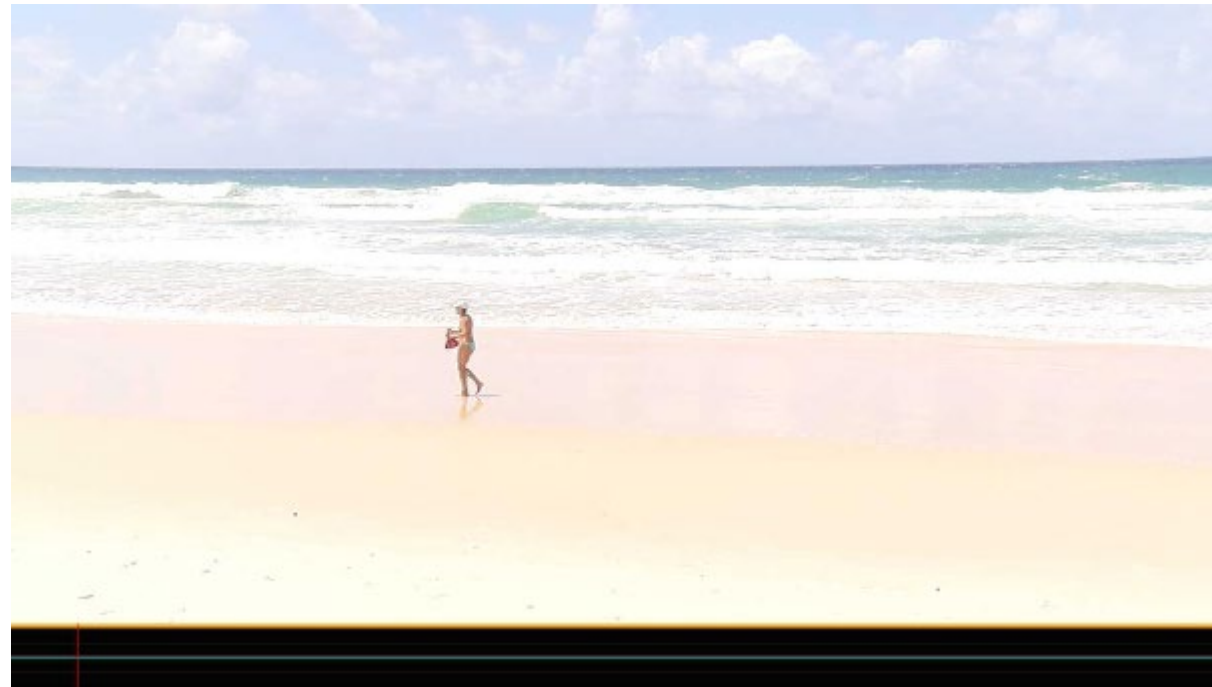
Underneath the LCD are buttons for SD card slot selection, LoLux, C/Review, Zebras, Display and Camera Status.

Detachable Handle

Audio takes two forms. The GY-HM170 comes with a detachable handle. If not fitted, an inbuilt stereo mic gathers the audio, however the handle is attached, a process that takes literally seconds, twin XLR ports are available and an external mic holder. Our test model came with a JVC mic in the box. Under a Perspex flap on the left hand side of the handle are all the audio controls for channel selection, input selection and auto/manual switches for each channel.

The detachable handle also contains a rocker zoom button, record on/off switch and an audio zoom

When you turn this camera on for the first time, it prompts you to allow it to perform a self-diagnostic which takes approximately 6 minutes. Next is to set the date and time. One thing we did notice is that there is a lag between turning on the power to the camera and the time before it is ready to start shooting. We assume it is during this period that a short camera diagnostic is place for those seconds.



Click above to play video

There is no Wi-Fi in the GY-HM170, instead a 2.5mm mini jack is present for a wired remote. A headphone jack is also present.

As mentioned, the GY-HM170 belies its power by its size; it is also a lightweight at only 1.1Kg including the battery. It is also small enough to fit into a backpack, making it easily transportable.

When shooting, all controls are easy to find, although if you have the auto detect viewfinder turned on, you need to open the LCD to get to the controls under it meaning you have to take your eyes off the subject potentially.

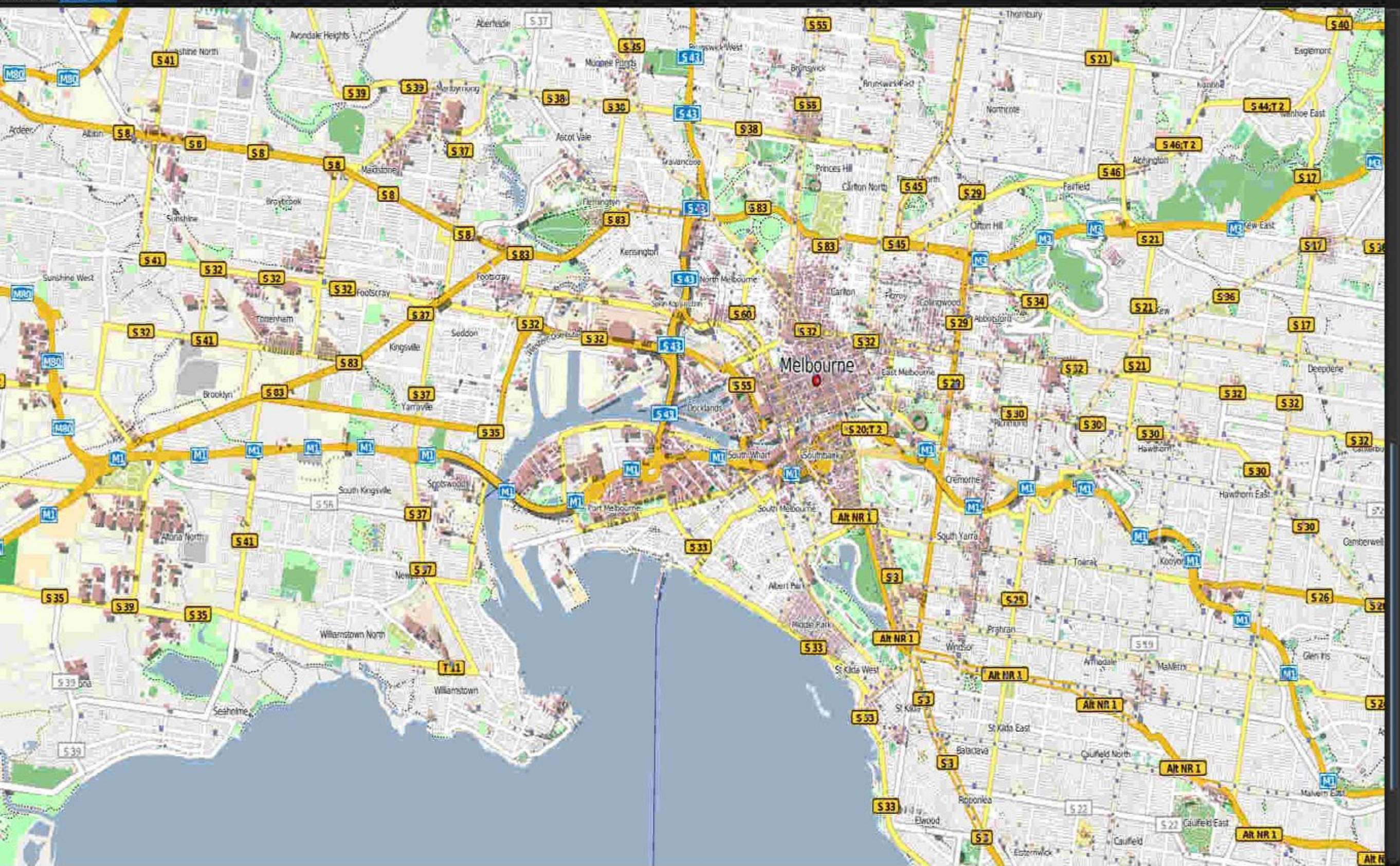
One thing that was annoyance as against a fault or hindrance, is that because I am left eye dominant, taking the eyecup off and turning out was a task of sheer frustration as it is so tight, putting back is a challenge unto itself!

Imagery in both 4K and full HD was superb with even low light conditions being taken in the GY-HM170's stride. The long form zoom factor is excellent for a camera of this size, and therefore lends itself to a large variety of situations in news gathering, events and sports and wildlife shooting.

Conclusion

This is a grand little camera that in the small form factor segment of the market certainly throws a cat among the pigeons in my opinion. Pricing is also very keen with some dealers selling it for under \$3K. According to the websites I looked in Australia, it seems demand is already high is most show it as being on back order.







review: streetmaps 5

Need some maps for that video you are planning or shooting? David Smith reckons Streetmaps 5 will get you on the right track!



Motion Studios is a German software company that produces ultra-high resolution travel planning and digital mapping software. I have done video and print reviews of the travel planner Vasco da Gama 9 (<https://vimeo.com/126331094>) and also StreetMaps 4 Ultimate Collection (<https://vimeo.com/126331094>), as well as some earlier versions you can track down online.

One thing I will say about the team at Motion Studios is that their upgrades are always worth waiting for. Version 5 of StreetMaps represents a massive amount of work, starting with a complete redesign of the mapping engine to produce maps that have higher detail, are easier to use and are far more customizable.

StreetMaps 5 Ultimate: a major upgrade

The new package is huge. The program and supporting data are now delivered on two Blu-ray disks which contain 198GB of

vector, altitude and satellite data, of which 75GB are devoted to global elevation data. The result is a set of maps covering 220,000 cities, towns and villages, more than 2.7 times the number included in StreetMaps 4.

All of the maps are highly customizable. You can choose from numerous preset colour schemes, or develop your own and save it for future use. Especially handy is the ability to make either water or land areas – or both – transparent. This means you could, for example, develop a map showing just the state borders and all railway lines and nothing else. Or you could have just the satellite view of a continent displayed over a transparent background to which you might add animated water, as is commonly done for TV News weather maps.

There are six main map settings:

- Road and rail network with eight sub-sections)
- Toponym (State, City, Town, Suburb, Village and Hamlet)
- Symbols (Sustenance, Education, Healthcare, Driving Directions etc)
- Nature (Land, Oceans and waters, Nature Reserves, Mud, Sand Glacier etc)
- Green Spaces (Sporting Pitches, Golf Courses, Vineyards, Zoos etc)

- Constructed Areas (Industrial, Commercial, Barracks, Hospitals, Airports etc)

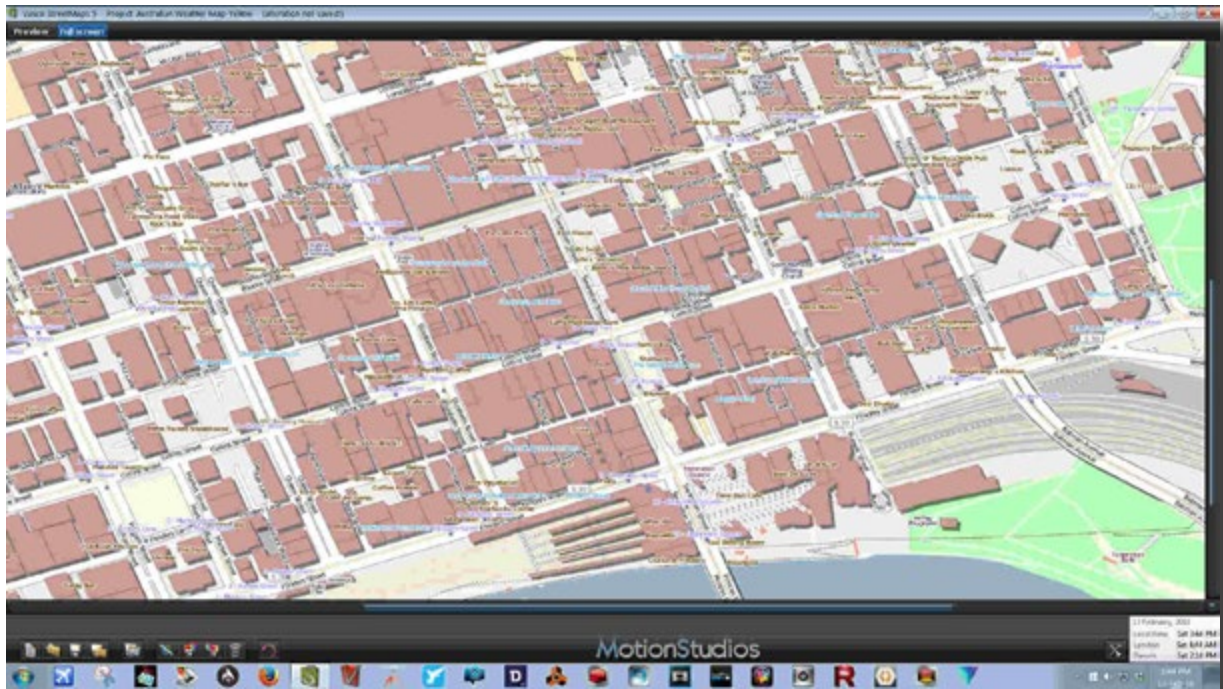
For each of these you have detailed control of colours, shadows, glows and patterns and the level of detail revealed at any given map magnification can be automatically selected, or switched permanently on or off as required.

You can even select between summer and winter views, with alpine snowfields visible in winter. Mountains and valleys will almost give you vertigo owing to the 3D effect of the finely detailed elevation data. Of course map of roads, streets and so on gradually change with time. The maps included in StreetMaps 5 are current as at October 2015, so there's not much chance you'll get lost, even if you use these maps to drive from town to town in the real world.

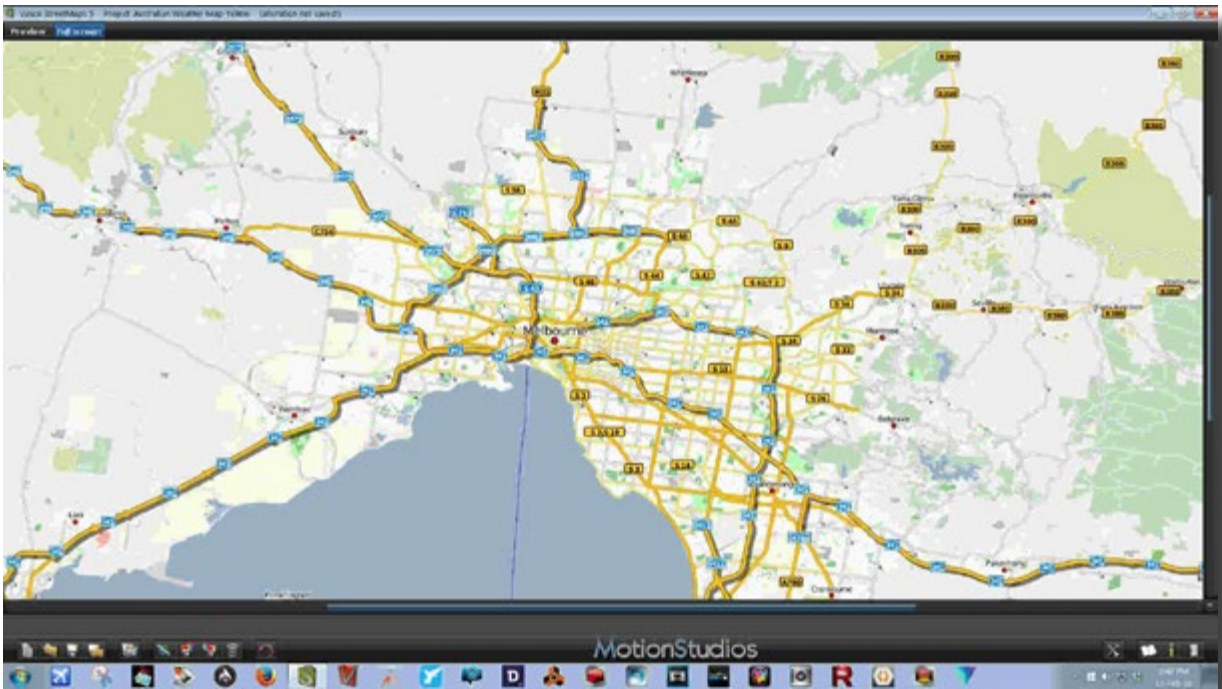
How can I use the Street Maps?

The short answer is – any way that comes to mind. Any of the maps you generate can be used in any format such as print, web or video for both private and commercial use.

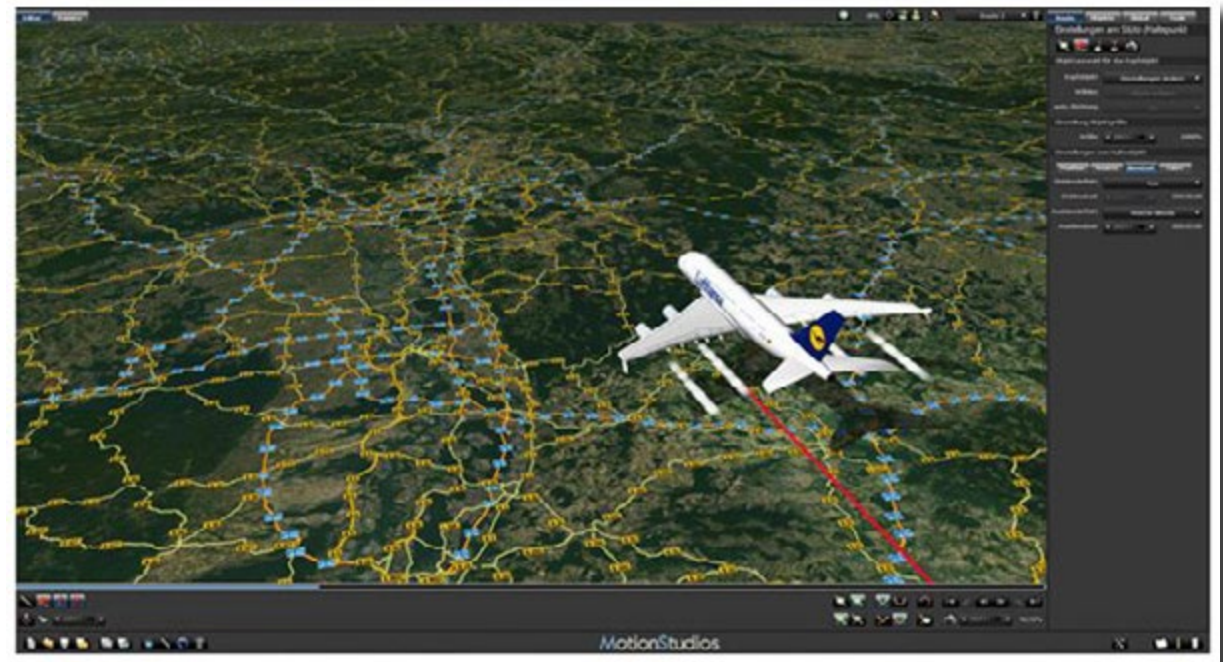




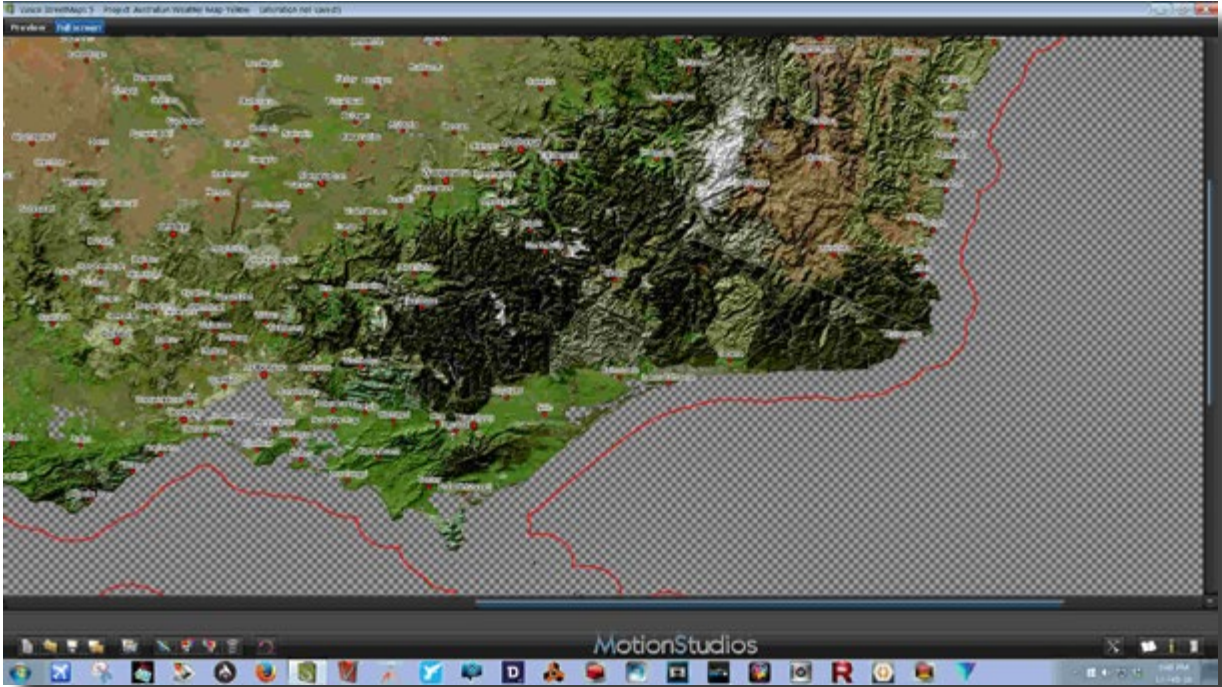
Melbourne Detail



Melbourne Region



Vasco Da Gama Integration



Victoria Satellite



review: streetmaps 5

There are no royalties to be paid. Furthermore, all of the maps can be imported into Vasco da Gama and the embedded GPS data will ensure that the maps are located perfectly on the globe. Vasco da Gama includes a large number of beautifully modelled real buildings for each of the world's major cities and these are also GPS tagged so they will appear perfectly orientated on the street where you'll find them in real life.

Using these two programs together means you can very easily take a motor scooter ride from your hotel in Rome to the airport, board a jet that will take you to Sydney, then board a small pleasure cruiser for a sightseeing trip around Sydney Harbour. All of the important local buildings can be present and your aircraft and boat can even have the correct livery for the company in question, such as Alitalia or Qantas.

Finally, that trip can be output to any one of a wide variety of video formats, ranging from low-resolution DV right up to ultra-high definition 4K video files. You can then import the video into any non-linear editing package (NLE) and add your narration, music, travel stills or video clips and so on to make your journey into a memorable souvenir for friends and family. In a professional context you can add a touch of class to your cli-

ent's promotional video, or to a film or documentary. The possibilities are truly limitless.

Ease of use

StreetMaps 5 has its own dedicated user interface which is simple and logical to use. You will be wise to read the manual so as to get the best out of the software and there are numerous video tutorials available online. There is also a very comprehensive DVD of tutorials available to buy from Motion Studios. I discovered all sorts of tips and shortcuts by spending time with these tutorials so they're worth every cent in my view.

The most important thing to bear in mind from the outset is the sheer amount of data you're dealing with. The faster your computer and the more RAM you have, the better will be your experience. For example, saving a fully featured map of Australia with embedded GeoTIFF information can easily produce a TIFF file of half a gigabyte. You need to allow for this when planning your projects.

Summary

StreetMaps 5 Ultimate Collection is a classy, high-end product that will enable you to produce professional quality customised maps for any purpose you can think of. The maps can be imported into the companion program Vasco da Gama with perfect positioning thanks to the embedded GPS data. Both programs are very stable and, for the most part, intuitive to use, although time spent with the manual will be helpful in getting you up to speed. There are no commercial limitations on

how the final maps or videos may be used, which represents a massive cost saving for commercial projects. Considering that individual LANDSAT images must be licensed at anywhere from hundreds to thousands of dollars per image, Motion Studios provide a service that is quite simply unmatched. This is a fabulous product.

Vendor: Motion Studios

Web Site: motionstudios.de

Price: Vasco da Gama 9 HD Ultimate EUR \$149 + Shipping

Website: <http://www.motionstudios.de>

Available for: Win, Mac

We liked: Vastly expanded number of cities covered, faster and more responsive thanks to redesigned core engine, newly expanded elevation data for more realistic 3D terrain

We didn't like: Loading an earlier project sometimes defaults to the world map. Lasso for region selection was blank

We give it:





review: fxhome hitfilm 4

We thought Hitfilm 3 was damn good... now David Smith reviews Hitfilm 4 and says it's even better and astonishing value.



software



Hitfilm NLE Interface

HitFilm 4 Pro is an astonishingly full-featured non-linear editing (NLE) and 3D graphics package which is available at an almost unbeatable price. More about that later.

Version 3 was impressive for many reasons and the new Version 4 offers a whole lot more. This is not just a subtle evolution but a revolutionary integration of numerous industry-leading features including:

- Advanced animation controls
- Alembic format for animated 3D models

- Boris FX 3D Objects for advanced titling
- New realistic 3D lighting model
- Normal & bump maps
- Real-time 3D reflections
- Grid emitters for particle simulations
- Soft particles for realistic smoke
- New audio effects library
- Variable playback with JKL control
- Rate stretch for retiming clips and layers
- Corner pinning in mocha HitFilm
- 140+ plugins for your video software
- Retina interface on Mac

The only sensible way to get a handle on what these new features can do is to visit their website and check out the video demos. Set aside a couple of hours because there's so much to see and learn. It won't be wasted time – in fact you'll have a ball and your imagination will be raring to go.

What's so special about HitFilm?

First and foremost, **HitFilm** is the only NLE that is fully integrated with its own high-end 3D graphics and animation modules. This means you can work in either editing



review: fxhome hitfilm 4



Hitfilm FX Panel

or compositing mode and switch between the two at any time at the click of a tab. You never have to export your animations to another program and then re-import them for changes to be made. This makes the process extremely slick and efficient.

Secondly, you can run HitFilm from within your own NLE of choice – in my case Sony Vegas Pro 13. You simply add HitFilm plugins from the FX pane, just as you would

ways to tune the Matte, adjust spill suppression and colour correction. Most impressive was the very simple Garbage Matte control panel which made cleaning up any unwanted elements extremely simple and effective. I now use that plugin exclusively for my green screen work.

However, these plugins for basic manipulation of colour balance, levels and so on are totally swamped by the truly incredible scope of what else is on offer. Here you'll find Animated Lasers, Blood Spray, Lightswords, Fire, Gunfire, and Witness Protection. And those few barely scratch

any other. Make the changes as required, then keep working in Vegas. Totally seamless, totally intuitive.

I had a fairly complex green-screen project going last year and I had tried various ChromaKey plugins from, Sony, NewBlue and Boris Red. NewBlue was good, Boris Red better but more difficult to use, and then I tried HitFilm Pro ChromaKey plugin. The controls were extensive and included numerous

the surface. Special filters include the excellent Pro Skin Retouch, Rolling Shutter (to clean up CMOS rippling) and Day for Night. Version 4 includes 140 new plugins in the Ignite Pack. All of these plugins preview instantly in Vegas and most of them play back very smoothly in the preview pane.

Editing in HitFilm

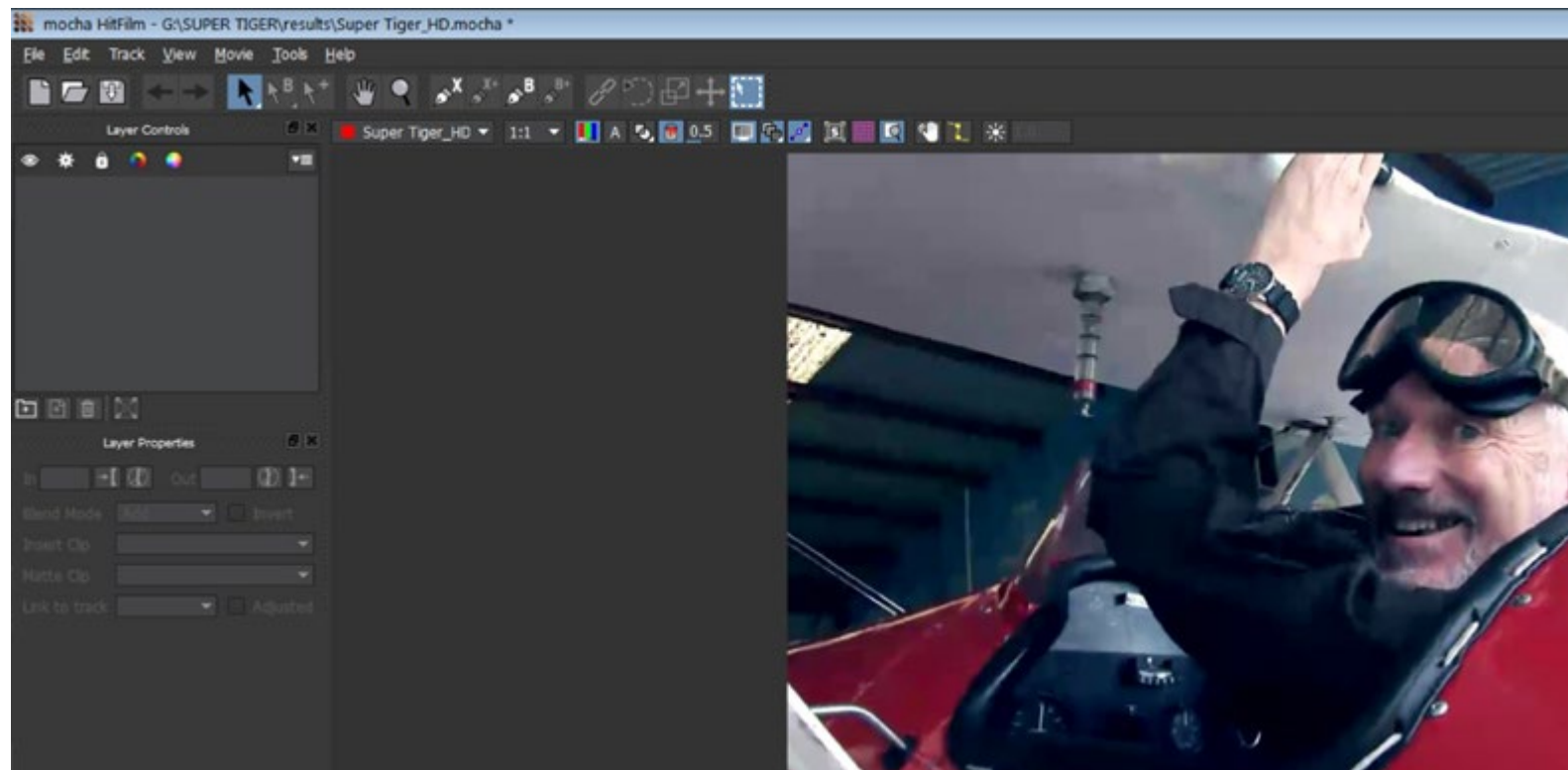
The HitFilm NLE is fairly basic with very limited audio facilities. On my system I found it quite slow to respond which was disappointing because other NLEs on the same system (eg Vegas, Edius, Pinnacle Corel Video Studio and even good old Premiere Elements) were all crisp and responsive. I tried HitFilm with both H.264 mp4 and HDV clips with similar results. If you right click the video clip, one option is to MAKE PROXY. I suspect that will make things flow a lot smoother.

Numerous effects are available within the EFFECTS tab or under the '+' key within the Controls tab. These are comprehensive and seem intuitive.

However, given the sluggish performance when using non-proxy clips I simply decided to return to Vegas and edit there, switching to HitFilm as required. This was very satisfactory and a great demonstration of the seamless in-



review: fxhome hitfilm 4



Mocha Hitfilm Main Panel

frame and still be tracked successfully. In this way you can perform all sorts of transformations such as altering the name and image on the aircraft and have the new one stuck to the plane like glue. I am very conscious of much there is to learn to get this powerful system working predictably but I am very heartened by the excellent video tutorials available within both HitFilm and Mocha that, I hope, get me up to speed Mocha HitFilm is included free with **Hitfilm 4 Pro**. Given that Mocha Pro retails for US\$600 and the whole HitFilm suite costs just US\$349, the conclusion is obvious. You should just buy **HitFilm 4 Pro** and get on with learning it.

tegration between **Vegas** and **HitFilm**.

3D compositing within **HitFilm 4 Pro** is a whole world of its own and it is really difficult to do that subject justice in a print format. I'll do a video review of HitFilm compositing soon.

Anyone for Mocha?

I think the most significant inclusion in the **HitFilm 4 Pro** package is Mocha HitFilm. Mocha Pro from Imagineer Systems has earned an enviable reputation as the most powerful and efficient planar tracking system on

the planet. The version included in HitFilm 4 is comprehensive and quite complex. I'll devote a full review to it once I've gained some familiarity with how it works. Suffice to say that Mocha makes tracking any object or shape through your video an extremely simple process and much more flexible than the corner tracking used in **After Effects** and its cousin **Boris Red**.

If Mocha HitFilm is the program's best hidden secret, then finding it is just as tantalising. Within the Media pane you go to New>Solve with Mocha HitFilm to open the main Mocha pane. This is where you tell Mocha which object or shape you want to track and let it set about following that object through time. The object can even leave the

Da Vinci Resolve and **Fusion** are two immensely powerful packages that are now available for free. Obviously that is an unbeatable deal. But if, like me you have a favourite NLE and want to be able to harness the power of HitFilm and Mocha, then \$350 is still exceptional value.

Website: <http://www.fxhome.com/>

Download: Unknown

Available for: Win, Mac

We give it:





review: storyboard artist ver 7

Storyboard Artist 7 allows filmmakers to create a digital animatic storyboard that lets their entire crew visualize a scene prior to production, ensuring that they are all working toward the same creative vision.



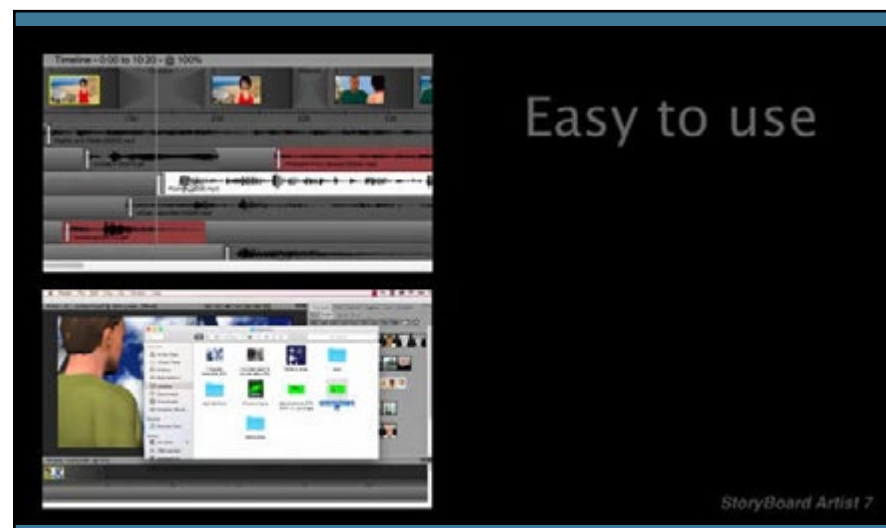
Using a storyboard system to visualize the differing scenes of a production have been in use since moving pictures began – and probably before that for stage productions.

No matter you are a skilled artist or at the level of stick figures, doing this ensures that everyone involved understands the “vision” of what is trying to be achieved and is invaluable in the streamlining of a shoot.

Storyboard Artist 7 is the electronic version of the ubiquitous sketchbook and expands on the normal “flat” 2D vision that have been in use ordinarily.

But forget the complexities of 3D software such as **Lightwave**, **Cinema 4D** or **Maya** and the huge learning curve. Sure, these packages can beautifully represent what you are trying to achieve but this would like using an atom bomb to crack a walnut.

Instead, **Storyboard Artist Version 7** gives you the simplicity and speed of working in 2D environments with all the flexibility you want when creating a 3D representation



Click above to play video

of your vision. All the necessary assets to create characters and scenes are available to you and these can be tweaked on the fly with motion graphics capabilities letting you define character movement within shots, providing an exact representation of the director’s vision for that scene.

If you already use **Final Draft** which seems to be the favourite scriptwriting application (maybe after Microsoft Word which can also be setup to layout a script), these can be imported directly into **Storyboard Artist 7** as can Screenwriter and others. Autodesk, .FBX and GoogleSketch 3D formats are also supported.

Images

Storyboard Artist 7 comes supplied with a massive library

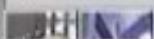
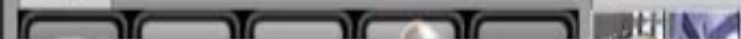
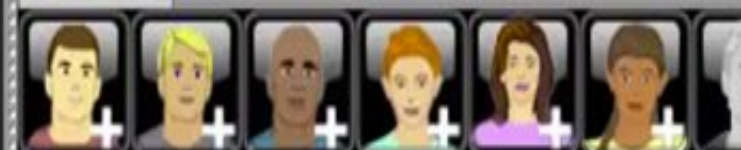
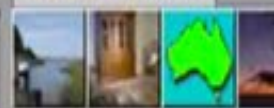
of thousands of images complete with different angles of view and of course characters. These are all customizable to your heart’s content. You can start with any pose for a character and change any aspect of it as well as the angle of view. Once you have a scene and characters set (and for location you can import images of your own) you can show the movement on set you visualize. Simply create the first frame of the scene and the last, and **Storyboard Artist 7** creates the interpolating frames.

For images, masking is available to hide any portion of an imported image. This allows you to isolate any portion of an image for integration with the rest of your storyboard.

This ability to transform images gives immense creative control with such functionality as perspective changes, opacity control, brightness and contrast, intensity and so on. Even camera effects such as Rack focus can be achieved as well as depth of field.

A timeline is incorporated in **Storyboard Artist 7**. This lets you import audio, special effects import, transitions, frame time settings and exporting to Quicktime and Flash or even HTML and PDF if you wish. Further, Apple’s iBook format is also supported giving you a whole gamut of export options. This means that crew mem





review: storyboard artist ver 7



Special effects can be imported



Use photographs as parts of your scene or import graphics

bers in different locations can be kept updated.

Mobile

Both Android and iOS apps are available letting you create storyboards on location, or anywhere else for that matter. Existing storyboards from the desktop version can also be uploaded to mobile devices so you can continue work you have already started.

Conclusion

Storyboard Artist 7 is a worthwhile investment to anyone who writes and shoots short films, long form motion pictures. It is a brilliant way to get your mental image down onto paper (or computer screen) quickly and easily, especially if like many, you are no artist!

At US\$499 it is not that expensive when you consider the time it can save in trying to create a scene as it lets everyone know exactly what you are after.

Website: <http://www.powerproduction.com/storyboard-artist.html>

Download: Approx 2GB

Available for: Win Mac and apps for Android and iOS

We give it:



review: corel videostudio x9

Frank McLeod initially used Corel VideoStudio 6SE and now finds the latest version has come a long, long way!



Although not released until 16th February, I was fortunate enough to be given a detailed run through of VideoStudio X9 (VXS9) by two of the senior people at Corel five days earlier. I got my own grubby little hands on a copy the following day and have been on a 'getting to know you' mission since.

I can't but shake my head at how far this product has come since I first used it in version 6SE when it was still part of the Ulead stable. This current edition beggars the imagination in comparison.

First things first:

This is a big download and the Ultimate package took up 3.8GB on my machine, so be warned if your bandwidth or data package is limited. Mind you the Ultimate version has more bells and whistles than the smaller (and cheaper) 'Pro' version but once you've looked at the comparison charge pointing up the differences between the two, to my mind it's a no-brainer as to which one you would buy.

Prior to the actual download of the program, I was invited to download an 'install-



The Main Interface

er' which once activated did all the rest automatically. Set aside a couple of hours unless you have a really fast link. When you then start the install, you have the option to download both the 32 and 64-bit version, but obviously, both you and the software will be happier if your system is 64-bit.

Once the main program is installed along with the bonus assets, you install the Blu-ray module which takes only seconds. After this, the Desktop has a new series of icons visible – the actual VideoStudioX9 shortcut, one for Fast Flick, iZotope Music and Speech Cleaner and VideoStudio MyDVD.



review: corel videostudio x9

The Minor Players

FastFlick is predominantly for slide shows using supplied templates. While there is a category of templates for videos of custom length, this is not immediately obvious it is the main emphasis of FastFlick. For me, if you are comfortable with Video Studio itself, will wither on the vine in disuse. But if the mood takes you, you can access FastFlick either as a standalone program or from within VideoStudio.

IZotope Music and Speech Cleaner is an automatic program with minimal controls that provides a degree of voice and music improvement. It is a free tool that comes with VSX9 but is a good example of you get what you pay for. While I have not experienced the retail version, it certainly has a lot more controls. However, whether I would buy the 'full' version for \$99US as opposed to using (free) Audacity to clean up sounds is moot.

VideoStudio MYDVD is one of the last of a dying breed – a DVD authoring program! (Adobe has given up on Encore as has Sony with DVD Architect.) It is largely a re-badged version of Pinnacle MyDVD and like its relative, simple to use.

Start up

Once the installation is finished the program boots up very quickly into the default User Interface. This can be tailored to your requirements by docking and resizing the

various windows and – joy of joys – can be shared across two monitors. My version defaulted to the NTSC settings so the first thing I did was go through Settings/Preferences to alter the parameters to suit local conditions and my preferences.

It is at this stage, if you have doubts about your computer's gruntiness, you would also setup the Proxy template to suit. This is a feature that has been in VS for many versions and basically replaces your HD files with ones of lower resolutions/frame size to reduce the load on your computer. All the editing decisions and timeline scrubbing is done on this 'lighter' file but at the point of final output VS applies those decisions to the higher res originals to give you an optimised output. It might suit you, say, to set the template at 720 x 576 widescreen if your PC struggles a bit with 1920 x 1080 frame sizes or, on a higher level, if you are plunging into the depths of 4K editing, you might choose 1920 x 1080 as the size above which proxy files are created.

The Interface.

Restricting my comments to a single monitor display, the default User Interface allocates the lower 50% of the screen to tracks on the timeline, arranged from the top down with one of each type in this order – Video, Overlay, Title, Voice and Music. You can add and remove tracks (Settings/Track Manager) under the Overlay, Title and Mu-



sic tracks but not Video and Voice. (I have to admit I find this naming convention a bit odd, but if you ignore the names and just use them as generic video or audio tracks, all should be fine.)

At the very top of the screen, to the right of the program's headline, are three tabs which pretty much define your edit work flow – Capture, Edit and Share. Although 'Capture' is a bit passé these days with the move away from tape to solid state recording, it covers all modes of ingesting your media which then takes up notional residence in the Library. (NB For those new to editing, VideoStudio X9, like most if not all editing software, is a non-destructive editing program where editing actions and decisions are not reflected in the original media but only affect the finally exported end product. Unless you actually wish

review: corel videostudio x9

to change it, the original media stays in its original state.)

Immediately above the Timeline is a collection of timeline utilities. These allow a view change (Storyboard or Timeline view) and then access to various tools such as Undo and Redo, Capture (from camera, screen, CD, Microphone, etc.), the Sound Mixer (somewhat limited), Auto Music, Motion Tracker (a new inclusion in this version of VS), the Subtitle Editor and the Multicamera editing interface.

Most of the upper left hand quadrant is taken up by the multipurpose monitor which displays the Project (Timeline) or the Clip (aka Source) depending on your selection with transport controls, in and out point selectors, Clip splitting (Scissors) tool along its lower margin. The monitor can be maximised to full screen by an icon next to the Scissors tool and returned to its resting state by the Escape key.

The bulk of the remainder of the interface is taken up by the Library which houses all video, graphic and sound assets at least at startup. By selecting one of the tools arranged down the Library's left margin, the display changes from Media, Templates, Transitions, Titles, Graphics, Filters (FX) and Paths.

Making it work

Importing assets into VSX9 with the Cap-

ture tab selected is easy and intuitive. As required these are now dragged onto the Timeline where you might (??Why?) choose to view things in the so-called Storyboard view. Applying Transitions, inserting Titles, Graphic items, Special Effects and Paths is as simple as selecting the appropriate icon vertically arrayed at the right side of the monitor and doing the needful to apply it to your subject clip.

With a clip in the Timeline selected, two tabs become evident in the Library panel – Video and Attributes.

With Video selected, a number of basic editing options is revealed – Colour Correction, Speed/Time-lapse, Variable Speed, Reverse Video, Spilt Audio, Split by Scene (rarely a good choice) and MultiTrim Video. Finally, you can make some decisions about Aspect Ratio if necessary.

MultiTrim is worthy of special comment. While this has been around for a long time in VideoStudio, it really is a very easy and controllable method of removing the dross from a long clip, section by section. There is a frame-by-frame toggle control available and in use this is a very simple and valuable tool.

Now, moving to the Attribute tab, is where you find the controls to distort the video frame for a version of picture-in-picture and to modify any effect or filter applied to a clip. This last control is usually humbly hidden behind 'Customize Filter' icon.



Motion Tracking

All of the features so far mentioned are pretty mainstream and have been around in VideoStudio for some versions but how to the new – or – newer – stuff.

Motion Tracking

Motion Tracking is a means by which one video track can be tied to the position of a point or area in another. An example will make this simpler. If you wished to pixelate out a face of someone walking in a shot, you could do that with a mask generated by itself or, say, through a title tool and then keyframe that in a stepwise fashion as the target moved across the frame. Motion Tracking automates this process. By selecting a (preferably) high contrast point on the target using one of four tracker types – point, area, multipoint or mosaic – and then playing the footage, VideoStudio creates



review: corel videostudio x9

a series of keyframes while the frame or area remains in the frame. Inserting another media object onto a track, right clicking and applying 'Motion', the overlay track, tracking point or area on the track. Uses such as thought bubbles, a person walking, pixelated number plates or faces as just some of the uses of this feature.

Multi-Camera Editing

If you are a video club member or work with other videographers, the Multi-Camera feature is both powerful and efficient. With Ultimate VideoStudio you can handle six cameras (two in the 'Pro' version and more than most will ever need) and angle changes done on the fly, even a handful of years ago such capability was only present in professional level software. This is one of the simplest workflows for multicam editing I have seen.

Select your video from the multiple sources then right click and select Multi-Camera Editor (MCE). That workspace then opens and your videos are automatically imported onto separate tracks. If your tracks have audio, this can be used to automatically synchronise the tracks. The next step is choosing the audio – or combination of audio – you wish to use and then hit Play under the main monitor. The multi-view monitor displays the output of all the tracks and



Click above to play video

by selecting the view you require from that monitor, the camera angle is changed and shown on the specific Multi-Camera track at the top of the MCE timeline.

Fine tuning of the angle changes is done while still in this workspace and there is a warning that all editing should be completed before selecting OK and returning to VideoStudio proper for final output. When leaving the Multi-camera Editor and moving to the VideoStudio timeline, if further edits are made, they cannot be transferred back to the Multi-Cam Editor, so if the user goes back to the Multi-Cam Editor after making changes in VideoStudio, these changes made in VideoStudio will not be there. To clarify though, it is always possible to re-open a Multi-Cam project in the Multi-Cam editor and keep working from where you left it.

not allow me to delve into a lot of features in Corel VideoStudio X9 other than mention in passing. Audio ducking – background music automatically is behind dialogue – is said to be enabled and automatic normalisation of the audio is available. A whole lot of new effects have been added and I managed to find Boris Graffiti 7 tucked away on titling.

I do not admit to being puzzled with the idea that Pinnacle Studio and VideoStudio are targeted at different markets. To me they both will appeal to the amateur sector of the market.

Corel tell me while VideoStudio is ideal for users who want an easier to use tool that lets them get creative, Pinnacle Studio offers a depth of features that aren't available in other consumer video editors. Pinnacle Studio is as 'professional' users can get without moving up to a pro-level tool or price point..

www.videostudio.com

We liked: The price, range of functions, 64bit system, motion tracking and multi-cam editing with auto synch.

We didn't like: What's not to like?

We gave it:



Sony FS5 Cine Alta™ 4K camera in LowRange Across Australia





sony fs5 cine alta 4k in “lowrange across australia”

Used exclusively on a 4WD TV/Blu-ray series exploring the country

Produced by Melanie Galea and featuring lead cameraman Gavin Rawlings *LowRange* features some of the best production values ever seen in an off-road television show.

With that in mind Gavin Rawlings explained his decision to exclusively use the Sony PMW-F55 CineAlta™ 4K camera on the unique travel show, “I decided to go with the F55 on this show because I was very familiar with the camera and extremely happy with the image quality it produces. I’d ordered the F55 as soon as I heard about it. At the time I was looking around for a new camera system to replace my Sony EX1 setup. Talk about a huge step. I wanted to move into the 35mm sensor field and have access to high frame rates. The F55 gave me access to these features and so much more. The fact that the camera was very modular as well was a bonus as it meant I could strip it down and run a small prime lens on it for particular shooting scenarios as well as build the camera up with large PL zooms.”

Rawlings has used his F55 in many locations across the world and its wide and varied

functionality is something he still quotes as the most exciting thing about the camera and in particular how it can be used to shoot 4K.

He continued, “One of the main features that I have always been excited about with the F55 was the ability to record at 4K. 4K resolution works perfectly for a HD project and delivery. The ability to crop, zoom and stabilise in post without any loss of resolution is a massive plus for my work. That and the fact that I travel to some of the most remote places in Australia which I love being able to capture in 4K.”

For an owner operator like Rawlings, keeping up with the latest technology is as important as keeping his clients happy. The F55, according to Rawlings helps him do both as he added, “My clients are always blown away by the quality of the image that I’m able to capture with the F55. Audiences of *LowRange* have been very vocal in their enthusiasm. They love being able to see Australia in such clarity.”

With a body of F55 work under his belt and most of it shot in 4K Rawlings has become very familiar with how to get the best results from his camera. Shooting in remote locations isn’t always easy and the importance of being flexible and nimble is ever present.

He added, “With *LowRange* I tend to use the F55 mainly on a tripod and handheld. I also use it on a Cine Slider

to get some nice sliding shots out in the field. When you’re living and working out of a 4WD space becomes limited. Sometimes I’ll see a shot and think a big jib would be perfect, but we really have to be careful not to carry too much gear.”

Typical shots on *LowRange* include scenic shots, especially at sunrise and sunset. When Rawlings and the crew are on the move they will shoot a lot of convoy style shots in whatever terrain they happen to find themselves in including desert, rainforest, sand and mud.

Rawlings continued, “The 4WDs often get stuck and need to be recovered. This is usually when it turns into a ‘run and gun’-style shooting from the shoulder. Then there’s the night-time camping scenes where I have time to set up lighting and overall spend a little more time on perfecting the frame. Australia is such a diverse land. We have deserts, snow, tropics and each one of these environments brings its own challenges. I’ve taken the F55 through all of these and it’s performed extremely well. Typically I find I spend most of my time in dusty dry places. The first time I took the F55 to the Simpson Desert we were hit by 50+ degree heat day after day. I was sure the camera would





sony fs5 cine alta 4k in “lowrange across australia”

overheat or I'd have at least some type of issue but to my surprise I had none. That's when I realised this is one tough camera.”

Rawlings is clearly very happy with his F55 and very much sees it as his camera of choice for the future concluding, “I've noticed a trend in the broadcast world, especially with reality TV with the F5 and F55 getting very popular. Also having the ability to capture 4K RAW/XAVC in S-LOG as well as capture up to 240fps in HD has been a huge advantage for me with LowRange. S-LOG gives me so much freedom to play with the image in post and achieve the look I'm after. Having access to higher framerates has really helped with having an edge on other 4WD travel shows as they're only just starting to dive into that territory now in Australia. The F55 has performed flawlessly on these shoots and produced an image quality that has surpassed my clients' expectations again and again. I plan to stick with the F55 for a long time to come.”

Gavin Rawlings and his partner Melanie Galea own a production company in Sydney called **Venture Films**. For more information go to: www.venturefilms.com.au

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Gavin Rawlings and his partner Melanie Galea own a production company in Sydney called Venture Films. For more information go to: www.venturefilms.com.au





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