Studio M

Solutions Guide

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Welcome to Studio M!

We want to make your experience with Studio M as fun and as easy as possible for you. That's why we've included this Solutions Guide. It's jam-packed with answers to the most commonly asked questions, helpful tips and creative ideas to help you get started.

What can I do with Studio M?

Make a lasting impression on your friends and family with Studio M. Studio M lets you create and design your own greetings, certificates, albums, announcements, holiday invitations and any other projects for the occasions you want to share with your family and friends. How you create your projects is entirely up to you. Let the following sections give you some ideas and then let your imagination run wild!

You can create projects from Studio M's professionally designed templates

If you want to create a project quickly, Studio M comes with a wide variety of templates to help you create your projects. The templates are organized into categories: greetings, albums, holidays, announcements and gift certificates. We've designed each template to include a variety of color, sound, animation and preformatted placeholders. All you have to do is choose the template that is suitable for your occasion, and then fill in the placeholders with your own pictures and text to create a customized and stylish project. And, to make it even easier for you, Studio M provides instructions right on the screen, while you create your project.

For more information on using Studio M's templates, refer to the on-line help.

You can create projects from scratch

If you're a more advanced user, or you want to be more creative, Studio M lets you create your own projects. Instead of using preformatted templates, you can begin your project from empty pages. The possibilities of what you can do are endless. You can add text, pictures, sounds, backgrounds, shapes, movies and actors to your pages, and then choose from a variety of special effects.

For more information on the special effects available in Studio M, see *How do I add special effects to my objects?* later in this guide, or refer to the on-line help.

You can add text, photos, sounds and movies to your projects

Whether you are using a template, or creating a project from scratch, you can add all kinds of text, photos, sounds, and movies to your projects. You can select them from virtually any source because Studio M supports many file formats and media types. You can scan in your own photos, select graphics, sounds, and animated movies from the CD or your own CDs, or select them from on-line services like CompuServe and America OnLine. If you have a sound card, you can add WAVE or MIDI sounds to your projects, or record your voice with a microphone. You can also import or type text right on the pages of your project.

For more information on how you can add text, photos, sounds and movies, see the appropriate sections in this guide, or refer to the on-line help.

You can add animated special effects to each of the objects you add to your projects

Studio M comes with a large selection of exciting special effects. You can make your projects more memorable by adding transitions, path animation and interactivity to your objects.

Transitions

Adding a transition to an object makes it appear and disappear in an interesting way. Imagine sending a holiday greeting to your friends that, when played back, shows a photograph of you and your family gradually growing bigger from the center of the screen and then gently fading out. While this is happening, a personalized greeting appears, each letter tumbling into place.

Path Animation

Adding path animation to your projects literally brings your objects to life! You can create a path for an object to follow so it moves on the page. In which direction you move the object is entirely up to you. For example, you can make some text enter from the top-left corner of the page, travel across the page, and then leave the page from the bottom-right corner.

Interactivity

Is your project still lacking something? Adding interactivity may be just what you need to spice it up. When you add interactivity to an object, your friends and family can click on the interactive object during your project's playback and voilà, another object might suddenly appear on the page, your voice might echo over them, or your audience might find themselves looking at another page. Interactivity is especially convenient for projects that consist of many pages. Let your audience navigate themselves by clicking on various menus and objects to lead them to new pages.

For more information on any of the above special effects, see the appropriate section in this guide, or refer to the on-line help.

You can save your project as a self-running Windows program and send it to your friends or family on floppy disk, or by e-mail

When you're done creating your project, you can save it as a self-running *Windows* program where all the files in the project (pictures, sounds etc.) and the *Player* that plays the project are packaged together into one program that can be played back on any *Windows* computer. You can also pick a fancy icon for your project so all your audience has to do is select the icon to play your project. To pick an icon, click on the *Select Icon...* button in the *Save Project As Self-Running* dialog box. Choose an .exe or .dll file that contains icons. Studio M contains some really neat ones to choose from. Then, double click on the icon you want to use in the *Preview* box and you're set! For more information on self-running projects, see *Sending Your Project to your Friends and Family*, or refer to the Studio M on-line help.

NOTE: Once you save your project as a self-running executable file, you cannot edit it again. If you want to be able to edit the file, make sure you save it in the regular way (as a .smp file) **before** you create the self-running program.

You can print your projects out to send as greeting cards or photo albums

If you don't want to send your project by e-mail or floppy disk, you can print your project so it folds just like a greeting card to send by mail. You can also print each of your project pages out as individual pages so your project looks like an album or a gift certificate. For more information on printing, see *How do I print my cards and albums in Studio M?* later in this guide.

How do I bring my photos into my projects?

In Studio M you can add photos to your projects in a number of ways. You can scan your photos directly onto a page, select photos from Photo CDs and CD ROMs, or you can put photos from your undeveloped film on floppy disks using mail order companies or photo processing stores that specialize in "photo floppies", and then load the picture files into your project.

Scanning Photos into Studio M

Scanning is like photocopying a photo directly into your computer. The result is a high quality, crystal clear replicate of the original photo. If you have a TWAIN compatible scanner, you can scan photos or portions of photos directly into Studio M. You can scale the photo to create a smaller area to scan and choose from other scanning and setup options. The number and variety of the options will depend on the scanner you use. If you have more than one scanner, you can select the one you want from the *Scan* menu before you begin scanning a photo.

Once you have scanned a photo into Studio M, you can drop it into a picture placeholder, or if you are not using a template, you can place it onto one of your pages.

For more information on scanning, refer to the on-line help.

Putting your Pictures on Floppy Disk

Several mail order companies now offer a service where you can send them your undeveloped film, and they will put the photos on a floppy disk or CD for you. This is very convenient and inexpensive. We recommend you use Seattle FilmWorks. You can reach them at 1 (800) 445-3348.

Several large photo processing outlets are starting to experiment with "walk-up digital photo processing". With this service, all you have to do is ask for a floppy disk or Photo CD with your pictures when you turn in your film for regular processing. You then get the disk or CD when you pick up your pictures. Call your local photo processing store to see if this service is available in your area.

Finally, if you have a few pictures that you have already had developed earlier this year, or 10 years ago, and you don't have access to a color scanner, we suggest you call your local copy store. Many Kinko's and Copymat locations now offer color scanning. All you have to do is bring in your pictures and other memorabilia and they will scan them for you and place the files on floppy disk(s) or CDs. The quality is excellent, and you get just what you need immediately.

Selecting Photos from Clip Art CD-ROMs

If you have a CD-ROM drive, you can select photos from a CD-ROM to use in your projects. The CD also contains a large variety of pictures that you can choose from. Use Media Manager to browse through the selection. They might be just what you've been looking for.

Studio M supports many file formats and media types so you can use non-photo clip art, such as drawings. Why not download Arnold Schwarzenegger's or Cindy Crawford's image from your favorite on-line service, or use a cool WAVE file from a BBS?

Pictures that you load into Studio M from a CD-ROM drive are considered removable media because they are stored on a CD that may not be available at all times. Studio M has the ability to track removable media in your projects. If your project contains a picture that is removable, and the CD or floppy disk is not in the appropriate drive when you open or play back the project, Studio M will prompt you to insert the appropriate disk.

For more information on selecting photos from a CD-ROM, see the on-line help.

How can I bring sounds into Studio M?

You can bring sounds into Studio M in two ways: you can load and place sound files directly onto pages in your project, or you can record your voice or someone else's and add it to a page.

We are tremendously affected by our sense of hearing. You'll be amazed at the impact of adding a simple sound effect to a page. But the biggest impact comes from using sound to personalize a project. Few things are as personal as your voice. A person's voice can communicate affection, sympathy, empathy, enthusiasm – all emotions than can be hard to convey any other way. If you have the necessary recording hardware, you owe it to yourself and your friends and family to add your own or a family member's voice to your project.

You can open MIDI and WAVE sound files in Studio M. MIDI sounds are usually music or music effects and WAVE sounds are usually voice recordings or sound effects.

For you to use all of Studio M's sound capabilities, you must have the appropriate sound hardware installed on your computer. To play WAVE or MIDI sounds, you need a *Windows* compatible sound card such as a *Sound Blaster* with the proper drivers. To record your own sounds, you need a microphone.

Adding Music or Sound to Your Project

Recorded music can really make a difference to your project, and can help you convey a sense of your personality or a particular time period. For example, imagine hearing a wedding invitation with the sound of wedding bells chiming in the background. When you add the sound, you can also specify how long the sound will play, whether the sound fades in or out, and whether it plays more than once before the page ends.

Almost all sound cards will let you digitize recorded music into WAVE files. Usually, all you have to do is hook up your source device, like a microphone, CD-audio player or audio-cassette player to the line-in port on your sound card. Some multimedia computers even let you digitize a CD-audio recording directly from your CD-ROM drive. Refer to your owners manual for details.

If you are really serious about creating your own music, MIDI is a much more efficient format for music storage and playback. MIDI is used for music in most computer games. You need a MIDI instrument to generate the MIDI music. *Windows 95* has excellent MIDI support.

Your sound card probably comes with utilities to digitize music. The most important thing to remember is that there is a trade-off between sound quality and the size of the sound file. These trade-offs are made by selecting the "sampling rate" (more is better) and the "compression rate" (the less compression, the higher the quality). We recommend 8-bit, 11 kHz or 8-bit, 22kHz for Studio M projects. CD audio quality is 16-bit, 44 kHz. Even if you follow our recommendation, sound files can get very large. Try to record a segment you can loop during playback.

We have included a large selection of sound effects on the CD for your convenience. Use Media Manager to browse through the library, and check out the selection. Maybe we already have what you are looking for. There are also lots of CD-ROMs with clip sound files available from other publishers.

For more information on adding sound to your projects, see the on-line help.

Recording Your Voice

If your computer has a sound card, it most likely supports voice recording. Most sound cards also come with microphones, but if yours doesn't, you can purchase one from any computer or electronics and stereo store, or mail order company. Make sure you find out which sound card you have, since some microphones work better with certain brands.

Once you have your hardware set up, you are ready to record your voice. Studio M includes a basic recording function (click on the *Sounds* Tool, and select the microphone icon). You can also use the voice recording utility that came with your sound card. If you are recording a voice over (continuous voice track running across the duration of a page) instead of a voice effect (sound triggered by the person playing back your project), we suggest you make a few notes about the duration of the page and when key transitions occur. For more information on page duration and transitions, see the on-line help. You may want to time your delivery with what is occurring on screen. If the file is a little off, most sound cards include WAVE file editors to make the necessary changes to the file without having to record again.

For more information on recording voices, see the on-line help.

How do I bring movies into my projects?

Studio M lets you add movies to your projects in various ways. For your convenience, we've included a selection of digital video (AVI files) on the CD. Use Media Manager to browse through the library and view the selection. You can also look through other CD-ROMs to find the movie you want. But, you're not limited to just CD-ROMs. How about taking video from your VCR or camcorder and using it in your projects? You can do all this and more. The sky's the limit!

NOTE: If you have included *Video for Windows* (AVI) or AutoDesk Animations (FLI/FLC), your audience must have the appropriate playback drivers installed. See *Trouble-Shooting Techniques* later in this guide for more information. For more information on adding movies to your projects, see the on-line help.

Bringing Video from Your VCR or Camcorder into Studio M

If you want to use video in Studio M, you must *capture* the video first. Capturing is the process of converting a video signal from your VCR or camcorder to a digital file that can be used by your computer. You can capture video in two ways: as a single still image, usually called a frame grab, or as a segment of moving digital video.

Capturing Digital Video

If you want to capture moving digital video, you'll need a special add-on card for your computer called a video capture card. These are available from a variety of manufacturers at prices ranging from $299 to $2000. Generally the more expensive the card, the faster its frame rate, the higher the resolution and the better the image quality. Each second of moving video consists of 30 separate images called frames. Most lower cost video capture cards can capture 15 frames or less each second. The remaining frames are lost, and this may produce a "jerky" appearance. The less frames per second captured, the jerkier the video appears.

Studio M can use video that is captured in *Video for Windows* AVI format. Be sure your video capture card is compatible with this format.

Once you have installed the board and its software according to the manufacturer's instructions, connect your camcorder or VCR to the video capture boards input. Use the software included with the card to capture the segments of video you want and save them as AVI files.

Et voilà! Now you can bring your AVI files into Studio M by clicking on the *Movies* button and then on the *Disk* button.

Capturing an Individual Frame of Video as an Image

The easiest way to capture a single frame of video and bring it into Studio M is by using a device called Snappy. Snappy is a small external capture device that connects to your computer's parallel port. Snappy creates amazing high quality "grabs" of your videos.

Simply hook up Snappy and install the included software according to the manufacturers instructions. Next, connect your VCR or camcorder to Snappy's inputs. Snappy works like a TWAIN compatible scanner, so all you have to do to capture a frame and bring it into Studio M is click on the *Pictures* tool, and click on the *Scanner* button.

Snappy has a retail price of $199 and is produced by Play Inc. To find out more about Snappy, you can call Play at (916) 851-0800.

You can also capture a single frame of video using any video capture card. Video capture cards are available from a variety of manufacturers at prices ranging from $299 to $2000. To find out more about video capture cards, see the section above on capturing digital video.

Once you have installed the board and its software according to the manufacture's instructions, connect your camcorder or VCR to the video capture board's input. Use the software included with the board to capture the frames you want and save them as BMP files, or any of the other formats that Studio M supports.

Now you can bring your files into Studio M by simply clicking on the *Pictures* button, and then clicking on the *Disk* button.

How do I organize my photos, sounds and movies?

With Media Manager! If you are using many photos, sounds and movies in your projects, it can be hard to keep track of them all. Media Manager lets you quickly and easily organize your photo, sound and movie files. It's like having a filing cabinet built right into your computer. In Media Manager, the drawers are called *libraries* and the file folders in the drawers are called *categories*. Best of all, to make it easy for you to recognize the files you have in your libraries, Media Manager displays them as small previews of the original file.

To start organizing your photos, sounds and movies, create as many libraries as you need to keep track of your clip media. Then add objects to the libraries from your hard drive, floppies, CD-ROMs, and other sources. Each object is displayed as a miniature preview so you can easily spot it in the library. You can then organize your objects into useful categories so you can easily find them later. As you add the objects, Media Manager asks you to specify a name, category, media type (a picture, sound, movie etc.) and any other description that makes it easy for you to find them later. It's important that you give Media Manager enough information about where you stored the objects so Media Manager can easily locate them later.

If you access the Media Manager within Studio M, it appears on top of your tool palette so that both programs can be seen at once. When you need to use one of the photos, sounds or movies in a project, use Media Manager search tools to quickly find the object(s) you want. Once you have found the object(s) drag the previews onto your current page in Studio M using the right mouse button. The object(s) are placed where you release the mouse button.

To make things easier for you, all of the clip media on the CD has been conveniently organized into libraries. A sample of clip media is also installed into a library on your hard drive when you install Studio M. The libraries have been further divided into categories so you can easily find the objects you want to use. Browse through this library and check out our large selection. You may find everything you need right here.

Media Manager has a feature called *Auto Scan* that lets you quickly and easily scan through clip art files on your hard drive, clip art CD-ROM or Photo CD. All you have to do is select the type of clip art you want to search for and Studio M will automatically scan its entire directory and add all the pictures that have the same file extension.

For more information on using Media Manager or *Auto Scan*, refer to the Studio M on-line help.

Tips For Creating Effective Multimedia Projects

You may find that your project doesn't play back as smoothly or as quickly as you would like it to, or that the file size is very large. Use the following tips to help correct these and other problems and improve your projects overall playback.

Pictures

- Enable the *Reduce TrueColor Pictures to 256 Colors* option in the *Save Project As* dialog box. This option helps reduce the size of your project files, and ensures that most computers can play back your project's pictures without compatibility problems.

- Avoid using pictures for backgrounds. Pictures take up a lot of disk space, so try using solid colors, patterned backgrounds or gradients in your project.

- Try using smaller images in your projects instead of larger ones that can eat up disk space. For example, if you are using a picture of a friend in your project, try cropping it so only the head is visible by choosing *Matte Picture* from the *Edit* menu.

- Convert complex clip art (images made up of one or more components that can be modified) and 16 or 24 bit pictures to 256 color bitmaps.

- Use bitmap format files instead of TGA files or save the presentation as self-contained so that the presentation plays back faster.

- Convert your text and scaled pictures to bitmaps if possible.

Special Effects

• If you have a page with a lot of movement, like object transitions and path animation, avoid using a gradient background. Also avoid adding gradient fills to objects that also have transitions or path animation.

• Avoid adding transitions or path animation to two or more objects at the same time. This is a distraction for your audience and slows the page playback.

• Avoid adding path animation to any large object.

• The *Snake In* page transition may not play back well on slow computers.

• If your objects have a jerky motion when they play back, lengthen their timelines.

• If your objects don't play smoothly when they transition on or off a page, try converting them to bitmaps.

Sound

• Try using shorter sounds to free up disk space. For example, you can adjust the sound's timeline. For more information on sound timelines, see the on-line help.

• Sounds should be sampled at an appropriate rate.

• Avoid recording in stereo.

• Only use one sound per page.

Movies and Actors

• Avoid adding large actors to your projects.

• Avoid animating any other object when a video or animation is playing on a page.

• Video files (.avi) are usually quite large, so avoid using them when you want to reduce your project's file size.

Embedding Files

• Don't enable the option *Include Media Files* in the *Save Project As* dialog box if there are *Video for Windows* files in the project because this will slow down the time it takes to load the project.

Playback

• If you don't want a large project file, save your project as self-contained instead of self-running. This way, you can send the Player separately instead of combined with your project. A typical self-running Studio M project is about 700-900k in size, but when it's saved as self-contained, the size is reduced to about 300-500k. To do this, just choose *File/Save As* and enable the *Include Media Files* option in the *Save Project As* dialog box. If you're sending many projects to the same person, you will need to send them a copy of the *Player* that they can use for all subsequent projects you send them. Because many e-mail services only allow one file attachment, you may need to send the Player separately or compress the two together into one file. The Player is also available from Astound's CompuServe forum, or from our home page on the World Wide Web.

• We suggest always optimizing the playback of your project when you save it as self-running.

How do I print my projects?

If you aren't sending your project by e-mail or floppy disk, you can print it and then mail it to your friends and family. When you print in Studio M, you have three choices: you can print your project as a greeting card, on individual pages, or print it to a file so you can take the file to a copy center or a service bureau for high quality prints. If you own a printer, you can print your project at home in color, or black and white, depending on the printer you have.

Selecting and Using a Home Color Printer

Color printers are one of the best selling peripherals for home computers. Some retailers say they now sell more color than black and white printers to the consumer market. And for good reason. Your PC can create and display amazingly colorful drawings, graphics and pictures, so why not print them?

You can print a Studio M project in black and white, which may be satisfactory but sometimes that doesn't do justice to the templates or your photos. Color printers are now available for less than $500. If you are considering buying one, we suggest you bring one of your favorite pictures on floppy disk to your favorite retailer and ask to see a print sample. Be aware that color printers tend to be more expensive to operate, because of the expensive ink cartridges, and may be slower than a black and white printer with similar resolution and memory when printing in black and white.

When you print high resolution graphics, like Studio M templates or photos, you may notice that the results are not as crisp and vibrant as you are used to from your local photo processing store. This problem can be made worse by poor scanning or digitalizing, and is partly unavoidable because of the lower resolution of home printers. But the paper you use can make a big difference. Traditional white laser printer or copier paper is not very good for reproducing photos. You need glossier and heavier stock. Ask your favorite stationary, computer store or mail order company what they recommend for your printer.

Printing your Project in Studio M

There are three ways to print your projects in Studio M: as a greeting card, on individual pages, or print it to a file to send to a service bureau. If you print your project as a greeting card, you can have a top or side fold for the card. If you prefer the photo album look, you can print your project on individual pages, in landscape or portrait orientation. If you are going to take your project to a service bureau or copying store, or if you do not have access to a printer nearby, you can use the *Print to File* option and your project will be printed on a disk.

For more step-by-step instructions on how to print your projects, refer to the on-line help.

Printing at a Copy Shop or Service Bureau

Studio M lets you print to a file for those occasions where you would like the best possible printout, in both paper quality and image resolution – or when you want to send the same printout to many people. Imagine a holiday card from you and your family with photos, appropriate captions and text, and printed on nice stock paper. You can easily create such a card with Studio M, your best pictures and a little help from our local copy store. They can help you both scan in and print out your greeting on quality greeting card stock paper. The end result can be stunning and affordable.

Call your favorite copy center or service bureau and ask them what printer they will be using. You may already have that printer driver on your computer, but if you don't, you must get the driver from them and install it in *Windows*. Use the printer driver to print your project to a file. You can then take your disk to the copy store or service bureau to have your project files printed.

TIP: Files with color data can be very large. You will probably need to save each page to a separate file to make them fit on a floppy disk, or compress the file using one of the available compression utilities like PKUNZIP.

How do I send my projects to my friends and family?

Sending your projects by e-mail or floppy disk to your friends and family is one of the most exciting features in Studio M. Once they have copied your project to their hard drive, they can play it back just as it appears on your computer – with your words, sounds, pictures and all the great graphics, animation and special effects you've included with Studio M. All your audience needs is a 386DX or faster computer with 4MB of memory, *Windows 95*, and a 256-color or higher driver for their video graphics card. If you have included sound in your project, your audience must have a sound card that is compatible with *Windows* installed, and speakers hooked up to hear it. We recommend using WAVE sound files for projects that you send to others.

If you have included *Video for Windows* (AVI) or AutoDesk Animations (FLI/FLC), your audience must have the appropriate playback drivers installed. See *Trouble-Shooting Techniques* later in this guide for more information.

To prepare your project for playback on their computer, you need to save the project together with all its files, such as graphics or sound files that you may have added to your project. There are two ways of doing this. The easiest way is to save it as self-running, where all the necessary files – including Studio M's Player that plays back Studio M projects – are packaged together into one program that can be played back on any *Windows* computer.

Self-running projects are the easiest to play because they can be played directly from *Windows*. You can specify options such as a name, location, and floppy disk size for your project in the *Save As Self-Running Project* dialog box. This file will always have a *.exe extension, but the first 8 characters are up to you.

Something important to remember is that once you have saved your project as self-running, you cannot undo this action because it has been saved as an executable *Windows* file. It is not editable and can only be played. If you want to edit it later, make sure you save it normally before you save it as self-running.

NOTE: We recommend you use virus scanning software regularly on your computer so you don't send viruses to other computers.

For more information on sending self-running projects, refer to the on-line help.

Sending Your Project on Floppy Disks

Copy your self-running project to a blank, formatted diskette. We recommend using 3.5" inch floppy disks, because their plastic cover is better for mailing, and because your audience is more likely to have this floppy drive type on their computer. Buy the high capacity (1.44 MB formatted) ones. We have included a sheet of Studio M labels for 3.5" floppy disks with instructions for your audience. Whatever label you use, write your name, the audience's name, the date and the file name on the label, and make sure you explain that your recipient needs to copy the file to their hard disk before they run it.

Your floppy disk is a delicate piece of media. Don't just drop your disk in an envelope and hope that it gets to its destination in one piece! We've included a sample 3.5" floppy disk mailer with Studio M. These are designed specifically for this purpose, and are available at most computer and office supply stores and through many mail order catalogues. It is also a good idea to include printed instructions with your project when you send it so your friends and family know how to play back your self-running project.

NOTE: If you project is too large for one floppy disk, follow the instructions in the on-line help on how to let Studio M segment the file. Your recipient simply needs to copy all the files into one directory, and the project will assemble automatically during playback, and run on their computer.

E-mailing Your Project

E-mail is a very convenient and gratifying way to distribute your projects to others. E-mail (short for electronic mail) has been popular in the office for a while, and is rapidly growing at home. Chances are many of your friends and family already have an e-mail account. You will need to know their e-mail address to send them a project in this manner. Note that you can send the same message to several people at once.

Self-running projects are usually sent as "File Attachments". This means that your Studio M project is attached to a text message addressed to your recipient(s). This is like including a picture with a letter that you are sending. Almost all e-mail systems support attaching at least one file per message.

Studio M projects are "binary files". This term generally refers to all non-text files, including graphics, sound and video files. Formatted files from your word processor and spreadsheet are also binary. Some e-mail systems don't let you send or receive binary files from someone who is not on the same network. Check the instructions for your e-mail service. This problem usually comes up when sending e-mail via the Internet, and is being addressed by most on-line services and Internet service providers. For more information, see *Sending Your Project by Electronic Mail over the Internet* later in this guide.

Once your audience reads their e-mail, your project will appear as a file attachment. They should copy the file to their hard disk, making a note of the file name and the directory they are stored in. They can then run the project at any time.

There are three principal ways to e-mail your project to someone: using the e-mail provided by one of the on-line service companies, your personal Internet account, or your company account.

Using the E-Mail Service Provided by One of OnLine Service Companies

Examples of these services include CompuServe, America OnLine, Prodigy and The Microsoft Network. The four major services all support e-mail with binary file attachments within their own network (e.g. from one CompuServe user to another or one America OnLine user to another). Prodigy users will need to download the Mail Manager first (type jump: mail manager). Several of them also let you send and receive file attachments to and from any Internet address. You may need to use the latest version of your service provider's "client" software to do this. Upgrades to the client software are usually free, and can be downloaded from your on-line service provider.

Using E-Mail Provided through Your Personal Internet Account

There are hundreds of Internet access providers and software packages. SPRY Internet-in-a-Box and Netcom NetCruiser are some of the more popular integrated software packages that include e-mail. Most of the personal Internet e-mail packages include the ability to attach a binary file. Some may not allow you to send or receive binary file attachments to other e-mail systems. Systems that are MIME compliant should work. Make sure you are using the latest version of your Internet software by downloading it from your provider's home page.

Using the E-Mail Account Provided by Your Employer

Since the files created by Studio M are significant in size and the projects generally are not created for business, you should obtain permission from your employer before sending Studio M messages using your employer's e-mail. You may also find that your employers e-mail system does not allow you to send messages outside the company. Popular corporate e-mail packages include Lotus cc:mail and Microsoft Mail. All of these systems support binary file attachments so the files should send fine.

Sending Your Project by Electronic Mail over the Internet (FOR ADVANCED USERS)

If you experience problems with sending your projects to others using the Internet, or if the e-mail application you are using doesn't include an option that allows you to attach files to your message, you will need to encode your files.

A UU Coder/Decoder allows you to send binary data files, including Studio M projects to any Internet account. There are many software programs that convert your binary file to ASCII format, which is supported by all Internet gateways. Your recipient will need a UU Decode program to convert the text files back to binary format.

If you are using Microsoft Exchange for Windows 95, and you have installed a MIME compliant service driver for the on-line service you are using, you don't need a UU Encoder/Decoder program to send your projects. Microsoft Exchange automatically handles UU Encoding and Decoding for you. You can easily attach a self-running Studio M project to your message and then deliver the message to one or more of your friends. For more information on how to use Microsoft Exchange, refer to the Studio M on-line help.

FTP stands for file transfer protocol, and allows an Internet user (your recipient) to copy a file from an Internet connected computer to their own. If you are able to provide an FTP address that has a copy of your project and to which you can point your intended recipient, you can simply e-mail him or her the FTP address in URL format, and tell them to FTP the file. For FTP FAQs, check out at:

http://www.cis.ohio-state.edu:80/text/faq/usenet/ftp-list/faq/faq.html.

For more information on sending your project by e-mail using Microsoft Exchange or a UU Coder/Encoder, see the Studio M on-line help.

NOTE: If you are using a UU Encoder/DEcoder , the person(s) you are sending your project to must also have a UU Code/Decode program to play your project. They can get a program from CompuServe and America OnLine.

Obtaining a UU Encoder/Decoder Program

From CompuServe

1. Log into your CompuServe account.

2. Click on the *Find* button, or choose *Find* from the *Services* menu.

3. In the area provided, type UUEncode and then click on the *Search* button.

   The *Search Results* window appears with a list of areas that contain files for UUEncode.

4. Select *PC Communications Forum* from the list.

5. Click on the *GO* button at the bottom of the window.

6. When the Forum has loaded, choose *Search* from the *Library* menu.

7. In the *Key Words* area, type UUEncode and then click on the *Search* button.

   The resulting window displays all the UUEncode/Decode software available in this forum.

8. Select the software that you feel best suits your needs.

From America OnLine

1. From the main menu, click on the *Internet Connection* icon.

2. Click on the *Download Libraries* icon from the *Internet Connection* window.

3. Click on the *Software Search* button.

4. Type UUEncode and click on the *Search* button.

   The resulting window displays all the UUEncode/Decode software available.

5. Select the software that you feel best suits your needs.

Trouble-Shooting Techniques

I'm receiving the error message "Studio M requires 256 colors or greater to run". What does this mean?

Studio M is designed to work with systems equipped with 256 color displays or greater. If you get the above error message, Studio M is telling you that your system is currently set up for less than 256 colors. If you're system is capable of displaying 256 colors and you're not currently set up for this, follow the steps below to change your system's display setting.

Changing to 256 colors

1. Double click on the *My Computer* icon.

   This displays the *My Computer* window.

2. Double click on the *Control Panel* icon.

   This displays the *Control Panel* window.

3. Double click on the *Display* icon.

   This displays the *Display* control panel.

4. Click on the *Settings* tab.

5. In the *Color Palette* list, select the 256 color display option.

   We recommend a 640x480 resolution. Your system's display is changed to 256 colors.

NOTE: Some video cards come with software to change the color settings directly instead of within the *Windows Setup*. Check the instruction manual that came with your video card to see if you can change your color setting this way.

I'm receiving the error message, "Video for Windows is not installed on this system. Video objects which depend on it will show only a preview". What does this mean?

When you try to play AVI movies in your projects, and you haven't installed *Video for Windows* on your hard drive, Studio M cannot play them back. We've included the necessary driver on the CD. To install *Video for Windows,* follow the instructions below.

Installing the Video for Windows Driver

1. Run *Windows 95.*

2. Insert the CD into your CD-ROM drive.

3. Choose *Run* from the *Start* menu in *Windows 95*.

4. Run the setup program located in the *msvideo* directory.

   For example, if you are installing from your D drive, type d:\msvideo\setup in the *Run* dialog box.

5. Click on the *OK* button.

   This starts installing *Video for Windows* on your computer.

6. Follow the instructions in the following dialog boxes to complete the installation.

   You will be asked to specify where on your hard drive you want to install *Video for Windows.*

   NOTE: You will have to restart *Windows* after the program installs.

How do I find out more about Studio M?

Studio M's on-line help is right at your fingertips whenever you need it! At any time while creating your projects, you have instant access to all the help you need to create your projects. From the *Help* menu in Studio M you can display Studio M's help index or table of contents where you can learn how to perform virtually any function in Studio M. You can find information on any menu item, or find out about the shortcut keys that can save you time while you create your projects. Or, if you still have questions, look to our help for the answers to the most commonly asked questions about Studio M. You can also find help on a any dialog box by clicking on the question mark in its upper right hand corner. Information about the dialog box instantly appears.

How to Reach Us for Help...

We're here to help! The on-line help and the *Quick Start* include answers to the most common problems you may encounter in Studio M. Make sure you've checked these places first – you may find your answers there. If you still have questions, you can fax, e-mail, write or call us.

The best way to get your questions answered is by electronic mail (e-mail) to our technical specialists. Questions are answered within 24 hours, or the next working day. Please include your serial number located on the registration folder.

How do I send my questions to Technical Support?

You can choose to send you questions through the Internet or through CompuServe, if you have access to the CompuServe Information Manager.

Sending a Mail Message to Technical Support via CompuServe Information Manager

If you are not currently a CompuServe member, you can get a free membership kit by calling 1-800-524-3388 and asking for Representative 855.

1. Choose *Create Mail* from the *Mail* menu.

   This displays the *Send File Message* and the *Recipient List* windows.

2. In the *Recipient List* window, enable the *To* option.

3. In the *Name* field, type `Tech Support`

4. In the *Address* field, type `75300,3433`

5. Click on the *Add* button to the right of the address field.

   This adds the name to the list of recipients of your message. For future use, you should now click on the *Copy* button between the *Address Book* and the *Recipients List* to add the address to the *Address Boo*k.

Leaving a message in Astound's Library section on CompuServe

CompuServe also lets you leave messages in the vendor library section.

1. Log into CompuServe, choose *Go* from the *Services* menu.

2. Type `ASTOUND`.

   This opens the WINAPC Forum.

3. Choose *Browse* from the *Library* menu.

   A window will appear displaying Library sections.

4. In the window, locate Astound and then double click on it to display its library.

Another windows appears listing all the files, updates and information available in the library section.

5. To browse the messages, choose *Browse* from the *Messages* menu.

A list of message topics appears.

6. To read a message, double click on the message you want to read.

You can respond to any of these messages by clicking the *Reply* button at the bottom of the message window.

7. To create and leave a new message for Tech Support, choose *Create Message* from the *Messages* menu.

8. Type your subject in the *Subject* area.

9. In the *To* area, type `Tech Support` To the right of this area, type `75300,3433`

10. Select *Astound* from the *Section* drop-down list.

11. Type your message in the space provided.

12. To send the message, click on the *Send* button.

Sending a Message to Technical Support via the Internet

Each Internet access program has its own way of sending mail, though the address is common to all forms. Consult your software's manual on sending e-mail, and address your mail to: **tech@astoundinc.com**

Many of the on-line services also offer the ability to send Internet mail.

Sending messages via America OnLine

1. Choose *Compose Mail...* from the *Mail* menu.

2. In the To box, type `AstoundTS`

3. Type the subject of your message in the *Subject* box.

4. Type your message in the area provided.

5. If you want to attach a sample file, click on the *Attach* button on the left, and find the file you want to attach.

6. When you are done, click on the *Send* button.

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