

DT Videolabs - PlaybackPro Help

General Operation

PlaybackPro is based on a Preview/Program paradigm familiar to anyone who has used a professional production switcher. Preview is designated by the color blue, while program is designated with the color red. Program is what is currently being sent to the production switcher, while Preview is what will play next. Video files are placed on a drive other than the one the OS and application are located. Files can be on a hard-drive, a raid array, or on a network. PlaybackPro is designed to run on systems with two display outputs. The primary display (the one with the menus) is used for control, and the other is the Program Output. On a laptop, the local display is for control, and the external output is Program.

Preview Mode

In Preview Mode the operator has access to all application menus, as well as full access to the operating system.

The operator adds video rolls to the roll list ('Control A' or Menu/File/Add Roll), and places them in the order rolls are played back in the show or broadcast (using 'Move Up' or 'Move Down' buttons above the list, as well as Menu/File/Move Up or Move Down). While placing the rolls in the order of the show or broadcast is convenient, PlaybackPro is a non-linear playback system, and allows full random access.

The operator can select any roll in the list, and set its Start and End points, as well as designate the roll to Fade In or Fade Out. The roll can be resized and cropped, video and audio levels set, and the Slate Frame designated (all within the Roll Control section).

In Preview Mode, video is played back in the Preview Video section within the Roll Control Section. The Preview Video section will automatically resize itself to match the aspect ratio of the Program Display (as set in the Displays section of System Preferences application is OSX).

A run list can be printed (Menu/File/Print), or saved as a .pdf (from the Print Window), and distributed as needed.

At the end of each roll in the list are two fields ('On End' and 'Delay') that allow the operator to designate what will happen when the video ends. These settings are the *master* settings for the roll and are unaffected by the actual order the operator plays back videos while in Program Mode. The options are:

Stop: This is the default. When the video is finished playing, the Program Output will display black, and the application will return to Preview Mode.

Link: When the video is finished playing, the application will pause for the duration specified in the 'Delay' field, and then the next video will begin. The application will stay in Program Mode.

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Loop: When the video is finished playing, the application will pause for the duration specified in the 'Delay' field, and then the *same* video will begin again. The application will stay in Program Mode. This looping will continue until the operator intervenes.

Hard Loop: This is used for true loops in which the last frame of the video matches with the first frame, without passing through black. The Fade In and Fade Out settings are ignored. When first taken to program, the video will Fade In from black, and will loop continuously until the operator intervenes, at which point it will fade to black. This looks to the audience like one continuous video which fades in and then fades out at the end, regardless of how many times it has looped. The operator can cleanly transition from one loop to another (or to/from another video), while live in Program Mode.

It is important to note that PlaybackPro only references the video files, and stores all playback information internally. PlaybackPro *never* alters the files in any way. In fact, the same video can be referenced multiple times (by duplicating [Menu/File/Duplicate], or by adding [Menu/File/Add Roll] a roll already referenced). This allows for multiple cuts from the same video to be used independently. For example, multiple individual cuts from the same video could be designated by setting different Start and End points, or the same cut could have different levels or aspect ratios. Also, if on a network, the same video can be used in different ways by multiple machines all running PlaybackPro.

To play back a roll to program the operator selects the roll in the list (placing it in Preview) media222 and either presses 'Return' and clicks the 'Take' button in the Program Control section. The video then plays back according to how it's been set-up and the application enters Program Mode.

Program Mode

In Program Mode, video is being played back to the secondary output of the system. The roll that is being played back is highlighted red in the list view, and the video information and Slate Frame will move from the Preview Control section to the Program Control section. The operator is locked out of all access to menus and to the operating system. This is to ensure clean and professional playback, although the operator is still given *extremely* flexible control over which videos are played, and how they are played back.

The 'On End' and 'Delay' fields are grayed out, these *master* settings are unchangeable in Program Mode. Whatever settings exist in these fields are copied to the pop-up lists that appear between the Preview Control and Program Control sections on the bottom left of the application window, when the roll begins playing. Changing these settings (or changing the Preview selection in the list) will change what happens when the Program Video ends, but do not change the *master* settings in the Roll List.

The List section reflects the current playback situation. The roll playing in Program is highlighted in red. If the 'On End' pop-up list is set to 'Next' the Preview Roll is high-

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lighted in blue. If the 'On End' pop-up list is set to 'Loop' or 'Hard Loop', the Program Roll will be highlighted blue, but with red letters (i.e. Preview is also in Program).

While in Program Mode it is possible to change the geometry and level setting live on the output display. This is useful for exact sizing (especially for Montage/Spyder/Encore shows), and setting levels when the color/brightness of the output display is affected by external influences such as stage lighting. By pressing the 'Control' key, all controls on the Control screen become enabled, and effect the actual Program Video. Also, the playback controls under the Preview Video section (Stop, Play, Step Forward, Step Backward, Shuttle, and Scrub) are enabled, and control the Program Video. All of these functions are in place to allow alteration of the video while running through the production pipeline during rehearsal, and aren't meant to be used when live in a show, or on-air (although a little resizing, or leveling while live won't kill you in a pinch). Start and End points cannot be altered from Program Mode, and must be set prior to running.

During playback, the operator is given both an Elapsed Time Counter (time since the Start point) in green, and a Remaining Time Counter (time until the end of the video) in red. The operator will primary use the Remaining Time Counter to count out videos to the rest of the production crew. There is a Goto 30 button and a Goto 10 button underneath the counters. The Goto 30 button is used when doing a 'cue to cue' rehearsal, and the Goto 10 button is used primary for checking transitions when Links and Loops are used.

If a show has been properly set-up, and the elements run in the order intended, the operator only has to select the video to be run and 'Taking' them as needed. However, we all know this is not how the real production world works. Here are some common functions an operator will use during a show or broadcast.

End Video Early: By pressing the 'End' button in the Program Controls section (or pressing 'Esc' on the keyboard) the video, *and the audio*, will gracefully fade to black, and the application will return to Preview Mode.

Do Not Link/Loop: If a video is slated to Loop or Link in the Roll List section, but needs to be cancelled, select 'Stop' in the Transition Control section, or press the left arrow key.

Play Video Again On End (Loop): The operator can either click the Roll currently playing in the Roll List (placing the same roll into both Preview and Program), or selecting 'Loop' in the Transition section between Preview and Program Control sections. The delay before looping defaults to one (1) second, but can be changed with the lower pop-up list in the Transition Section. Once a loop is selected, it will loop indefinitely until the operator intervenes. Most likely this will be by selecting 'Stop' in the Transition Section (left arrow), after the video has begun playing for the last time it is wanted, however, also see End Video Early or Link To Another Video On End or Link To Another Video Now for other ways to end a loop.

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Play Video Again Now: If you wish to restart a playing video, follow the steps in Play Video again On End, and then press 'Take' or press 'return' key.

Link To A Different Video On End: If the video is not currently set to link, select 'Link' in the Transition section (right arrow), or select the next video in the Roll List. If you need to, change the link delay time if necessary (default is 1 sec). This will link to the next video in the Roll List. If you wish to link to any other video, simply select it in the Roll List.

Link To Another Video Now: If you wish to play a different video than the one currently in Program, put the video you want to play now into Preview (see Link To a Different Video), and 'Take' it (use the 'Take' button in the Preview Control section, or press 'return'). The current video will gracefully fade out the audio and video, and begin playing the Preview Video after the delay specified by the 'Delay' pop-up list in the Transition section. [Just imagine what happens in a show/broadcast, when the wrong video is called for. The director/stage manager must coordinate the audio and video departments to fade out the current video, decide what to put on screen/air in the interim, get the correct video cued up, and communicate to the talent what is happening. With PlaybackPro, all this is avoided by smoothly transitioning to the correct video, without any coordination with the Production Department, Audio Department, Director/ Stage Manager, and talent.]