honestech™
Stopmotion Studio™ 4.0

User Guide

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1. About honestech™ Stopmotion Studio™ 4.0

1.1. What is Stopmotion Studio™?

With honestech™ Stopmotion Studio™, you can easily create stop-motion video. Capture images using a digital camera, webcam or DV camcorder and add background images, audio, and music to create your own stop-motion movies. Capturing images is easier and faster than ever with the new auto capture feature. The grid and key drawing options will help make your characters' movements more precise and accurate, resulting in professional quality animation. Using a solid-color background and chroma key function, you can take your animation to the next level by placing your character wherever your imagination takes you. You can even apply chroma key to existing photos that you have.

1.2. Minimum System requirements

- Operating system: Windows® 8, Windows® 7, Windows Vista®, Windows® XP
- Processor: Pentium IV 1.8GHz or equivalent
- Memory: 128MB of RAM (256MB or higher recommended)
- Free Hard Disk Space: 50MB for program installation
- Microsoft DirectX 9.0 or higher
- Windows Media Format SDK 9 or higher
- Windows Media Player 7 or higher
- Image Input: JPEG, BMP, PNG, GIF
- Audio Input: MP3, WAV
- Video Output: AVI, WMV, MPEG
- Video Capture: Web Camera, DV-Camcorder
- Audio Capture: Microphone, etc…

2. Installation and Un-installation of honestech™ Stopmotion Studio™ 4.0

Note: To optimize performance of the product and your computer, ***defragmenting the Hard Disk Drive (HDD) prior to installing honestech™ Stopmotion Studio™ software is recommended****. Also, if there is any security software on your PC that may block or interfere with the installation or removal of the software, please disable it or turn it off prior to* ***installing or uninstalling the software.***

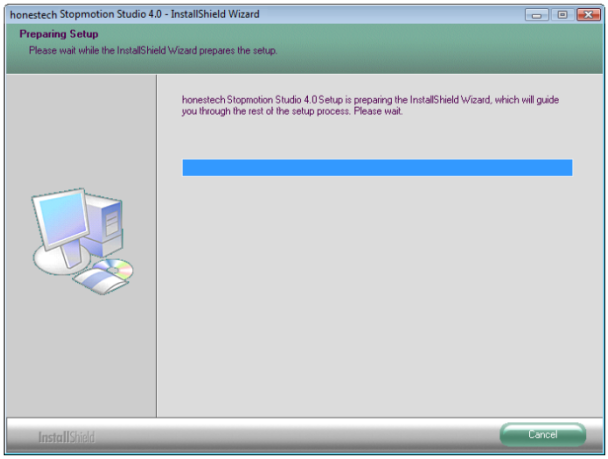
2.1. Installing *honestech*™ Stopmotion Studio™

2.1.1. Insert the installation CD into your CD/DVD drive on your computer. The installation should start automatically.

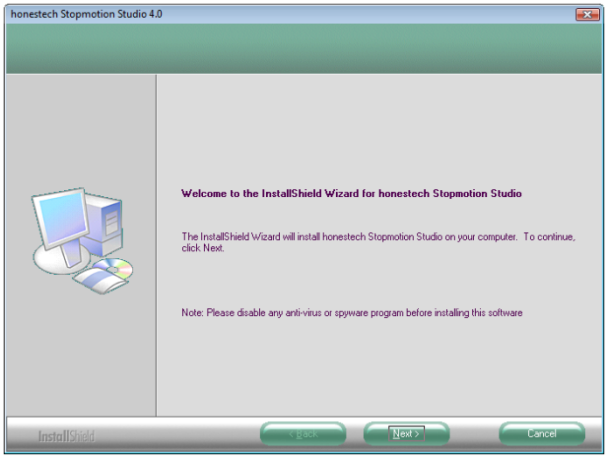
Note: If the installation does not start automatically, choose ***Run*** *from the Windows Start menu. Then enter "d:\autorun" (assuming the installation CD is in D drive) in the run dialog box. You can also double-click on* ***"Setup.exe"*** *file on the installation CD to being the installation.*

2.1.2. Click **[Install]** button to start installing *honestech*™ Stopmotion Studio™ 4.0.

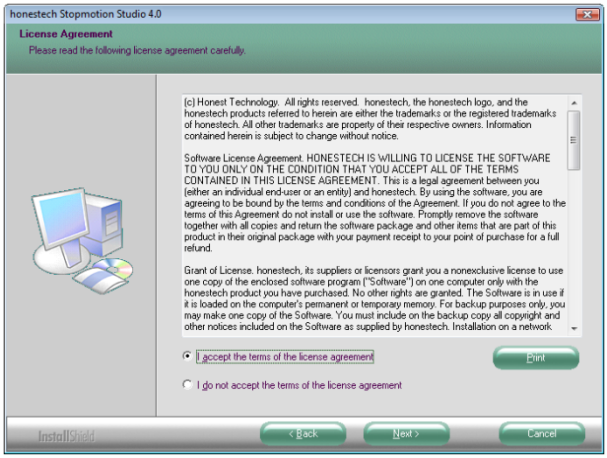
2.1.3. Installation process will begin with the following screen.



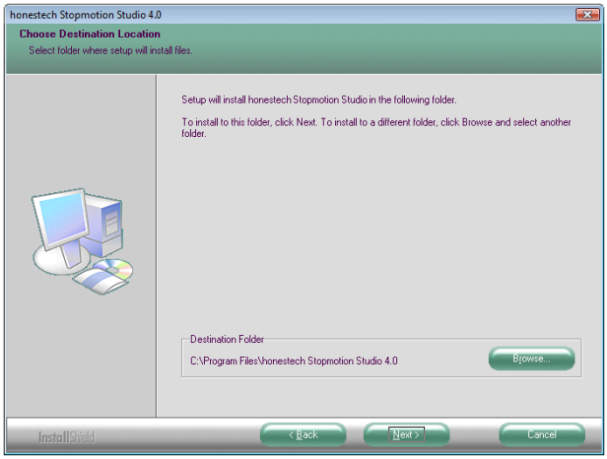
2.1.4. The following welcome screen will appear. Click **[Next >]** to continue.



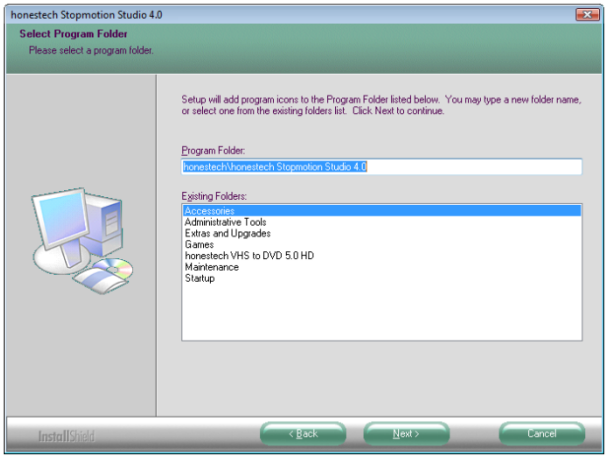
2.1.5. End-User License Agreement will appear as shown below, read the agreement and if you accept the agreement, click **[Next>]** to continue.



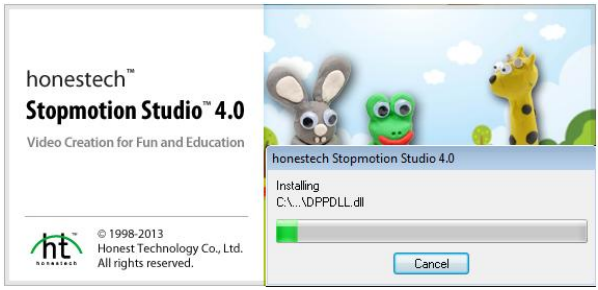
2.1.6. Choose Destination Location screen will appear as shown below. Accept the default or change the installation location by clicking change. When you are ready to install Stopmotion Studio™, click **[Next >]** to continue.



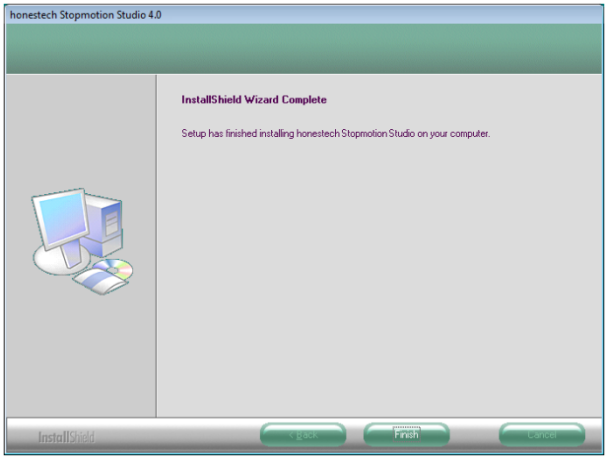
2.1.7. Select Program Folder screen will be displayed next. Accept the default folder or choose your program folder then click **[Next >]** to continue.



2.1.8. The Setup status screen will appear as shown below. This step occurs automatically.



2.1.12. Stopmotion Studio™ Setup is now complete; click **[Finish]** to complete the installation.

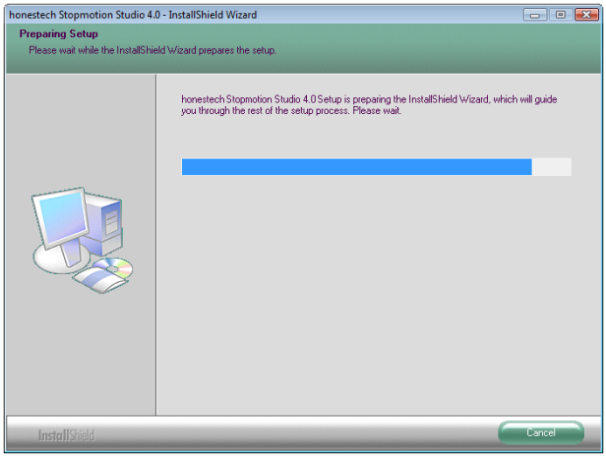


2.2. Uninstalling *honestech*™ Stopmotion Studio™ 4.0

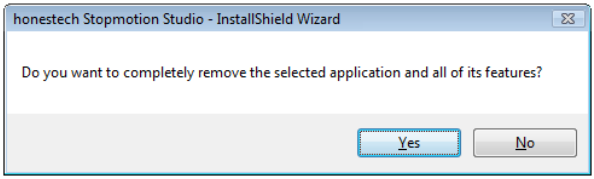
2.2.1. Uninstall *honestech*™ Stopmotion Studio™ 4.0 using its own uninstallation file or the **Add or Remove Programs** in the **Control Panel**.

2.2.1.1. To uninstall using the uninstallation file: from the task bar, go to **Start → All Programs → *honestech* Stopmotion Studio 4.0** and click on **Uninstall *honestech* Stopmotion Studio 4.0**

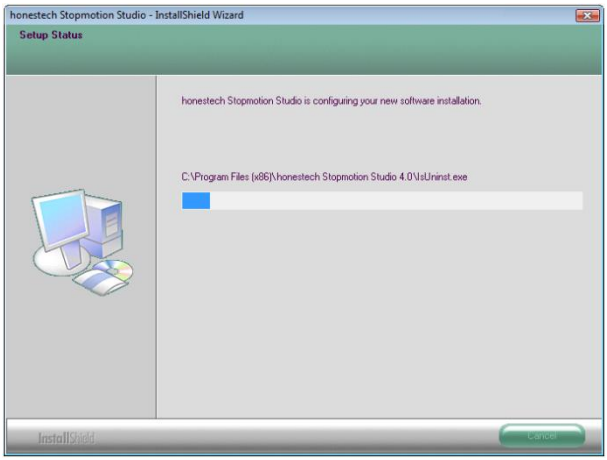
2.2.1.2. To uninstall with **Add or Remove Programs:** from the task bar, go to Start → Control Panel → Add or Remove Programs. Select ***honestech*™ Stopmotion Studio™ 4.0**, and click the **Change/Remove** button.



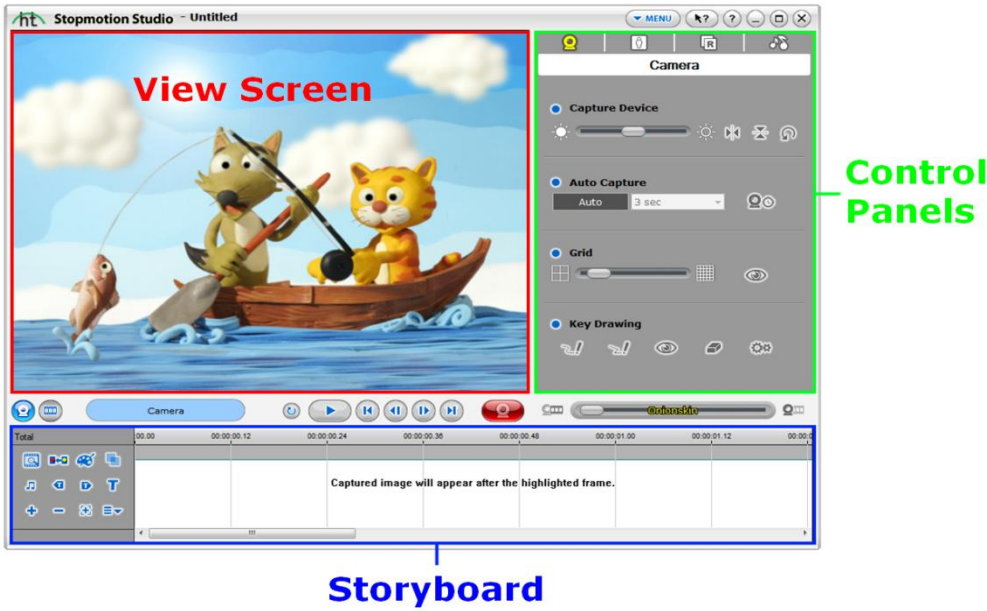
2.2.1.3. Click **[Yes]** to confirm and uninstall the program.



2.2.2. The uninstallation is in progress. Please wait for completion.



3. Program Interface



3.1. Menu Button

- Manage projects (new, open and save/save as)
- Create output
- Settings

Help Button

The Help Button provides descriptions and usage information about certain features.
How to use:

1. Click the **Help** button ( ).
2. Move your mouse cursor over any tab or button you wish to know more about. If the **Help Button** is applicable, the mouse cursor will change to
3. Click on the tab or button and an information window will pop up describing the specific feature and how to use it.

3.2. View Screen

- Capture screen
- Storyboard preview
- Image overlays

3.3. Control Panels

1. Camera
    A. Brightness Control
    B. Image Flip
    C. Grid
    D. Key Drawing
    E. Auto Capture

2. Chroma Key
    A. Preview captured frames
    B. Open and view background images
    C. Manual chroma key section adjustment
    D. Mask option

3. Rotoscope
    A. Open reference image
    B. Control transparency

4. Audio
    A. Import audio or record your own audio
    B. Easily synchronize audio clips to specific frames
    C. Add background music

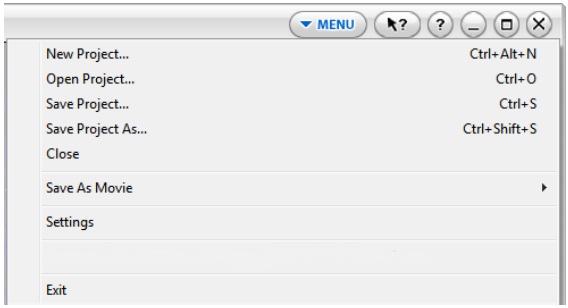
3.4. Storyboard

- Organize captured frames
- Edit frames (cut, copy and paste)
- Add audio
- Add text and titles

4. Managing Projects

4.1. What is a project?

A project file is a small reference file that points the program to your Stopmotion content (pictures, audio recordings, titles etc.), typically saved elsewhere on your computer. A project file will not contain your actual work, but instead indicates which files are needed and what work you have done within that particular project.



4.2. Create New Project

1. Click MENU and select **New Project…** to create a new project. (Hot-key : Ctrl+Alt+N)
2. If you are currently working on another project, the program will ask you if you want to save the current work.

4.3. Open Project

1. Click MENU and select **Open Project… t**o open an existing project. (Hot-key: Ctrl+O)
2. If you are currently working on another project, the program will ask you if you want to save the current work.
3. Select a project file, and click **Open**.

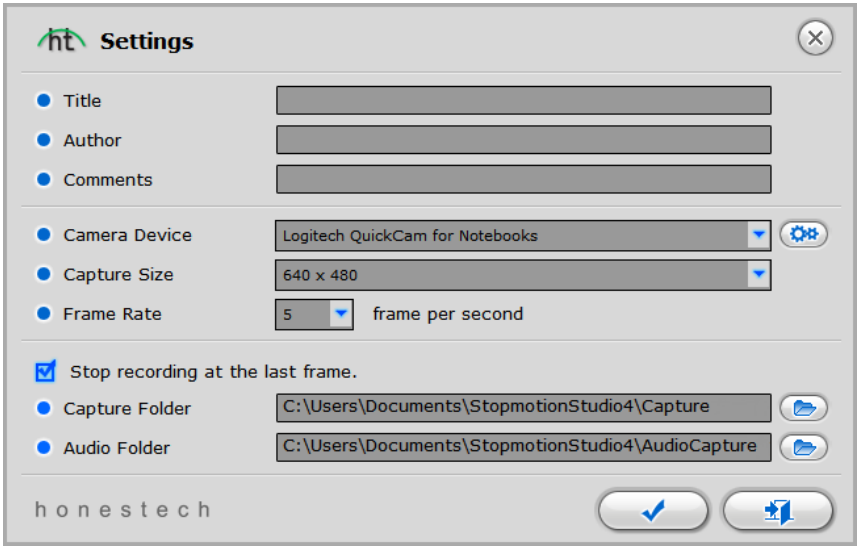
4.4. Save Project

1. Click MENU and select **'Save Project…'** to save the current project. (Hot-key: Ctrl+S, Ctrl+Shift+N)
2. If you want to save the project under a different name, select **'Save Project As…'** then, select a folder, name your project, and click **Save**.

5. Capture

5.1. Select Camera Device

1. Click MENU and select **Settings**. The Settings window will open up as shown below.



A. Camera Device: select a camera from the list of available devices.
   a. Your camera must already be connected to your PC and installed properly. Please refer to the installation manual for your camera or webcam for details.

B. Capture Size: select the capture resolution

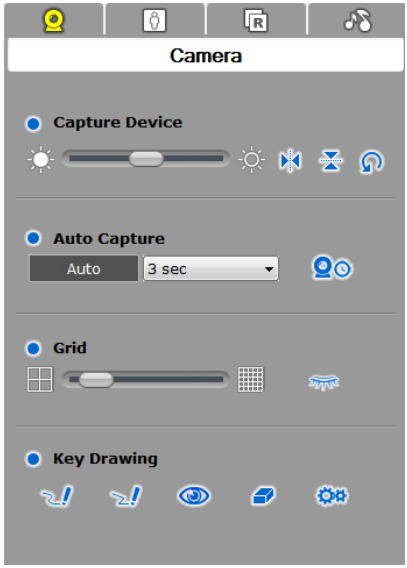
C. Frame Rate: adjust the number of frames to be played per second. Higher frame rates may give you smoother video playback, but more frames are required.

D. Optional Settings
   a. You can enter “Title”, “Author”, and “Comments” for your project.

5.2. Camera Setup

You can use various tools available here to help you create/modify your figures. The view screen will switch to capture mode.

1. Click to access camera options.



A. Capture Device

- : adjust the brightness
- : flip image horizontally (mirror image)
- : flip image vertically
- : return to default setting

B. Grid: Displays grid on the window to help users adjust the figure more accurately.

- : Control the grid size using the slide bar.
- : turn the grid feature on/off

C. Key Drawing: Make a sketch in the Capture window

- : Freehand drawing
- : Line drawing
- : Show/Hide key drawing lines
- : Erase key drawing lines
- : Select the color and thickness of the lines

5.3. Capture Images

1. Use the View Screen mode buttons to toggle the View screen for capture mode.
   - : Switch to capture mode – the view screen will show the image from the camera.
   - : Switch to preview mode – the view screen will show the image from the storyboard.
2. Place your subject in front of the camera to see it in the View Screen.

3. Click the Capture button to capture your first image. This image will be added to the Storyboard window as a frame.

4. Once you have captured your first frame, adjust your figure/object slightly and capture your next frame.

5. The “Onionskin” feature allows you to overlay the previous frame/pose with the current frame/pose in transparency mode. This provides you with a guide for your animation, helping you perfect your image for the next frame.

- Drag to the left or right to control the transparency level of previous image/frame versus the new image/frame.

6. Continue to move your figure slightly through its actions, capturing each adjustment with your camera. This will create the illusion of movement when the series of frames/images are played back in sequence.

5.4. Auto Capture

Auto capture allows you to automatically capture images of your figure at a pre-defined time interval without manually clicking on the capture button. The display screen will switch to capture mode.

- Auto : Displays the auto-capture speed.
- 3 sec : Define auto-capture speed (i.e. Automatically capture a frame every 3 seconds)
- : Start capture

5.5. Review frames

You can review your work before you create the final output. If you don't like any of the frames you have created, you can go back and edit your work.

1. Click to switch the View Screen to preview mode.
2. Click to play the frames you have created so far in sequence.
3. Use the buttons below to review your work.
   - : Play the frames.
   - : Jump to the first frame.
   - : Jump to the last frame.
   - : Move to the previous frame.
   - : Move to the next frame.

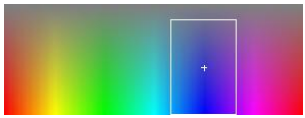
5.6. Chroma Key

To take your movie to the next level, you can use the “Chroma Key” feature, which works similar to the Green Screen visual effect used commonly in the film industry and news programs when reporting the weather.

1. Click to access chroma key options.

2. Click / to switch the chroma key on/off.

3. Click on the View Screen to select a chroma key color using the mouse pointer ( ).

 : The “+” indicates the selected color, and the box displays the tolerance range. You can change the color/tolerance range that you want to use as the chroma key color here.

4. Use the handles on either side of the horizontal yellow bar to adjust the color range:

5. Use the handles on either side of the vertical yellow bar to adjust the saturation range:

Camera Pane: Displays the image from the camera or capture device.

: Mask areas of your current image in the viewer pane with the background image (Background image selection required). Select the free line or straight line option to draw over your image in the viewer pane and create a masked area.

Background Pane: Displays the background image.

: Browse and select a background image.

: Select the free or straight line option to unmask all, or portions of the image in the viewer pane.

: Clear - Erases all masking in the View Screen.

: Soften Image - Uses anti-aliasing to minimize distortion and artifacts in the View Screen that can occur when masking.

: Undo - Click to undo the last adjustment.

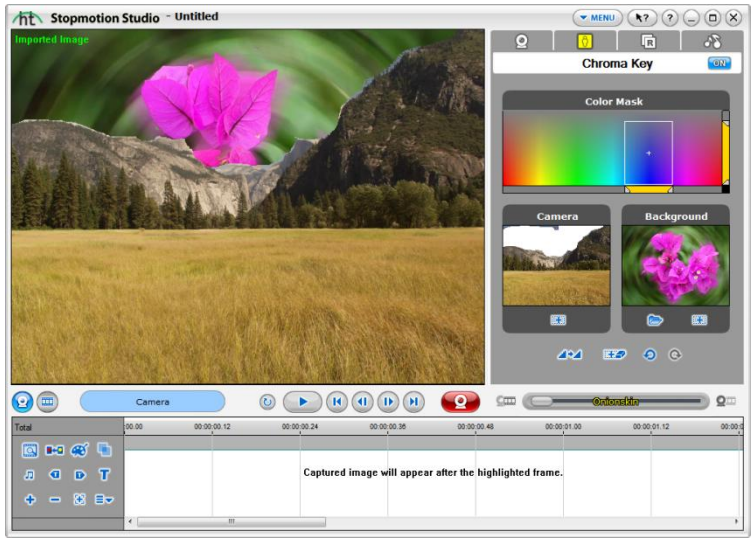
: Redo - Click to redo the last adjustment.

6. How to apply chroma key to imported images:

   A. Click in the Storyboard Tools.

   B. Browse and locate the image file(s) you want to add to the Storyboard.

   C. The selected image will be shown in the display screen. It will say “Imported Image” on the top left corner.



   D. Click tab.

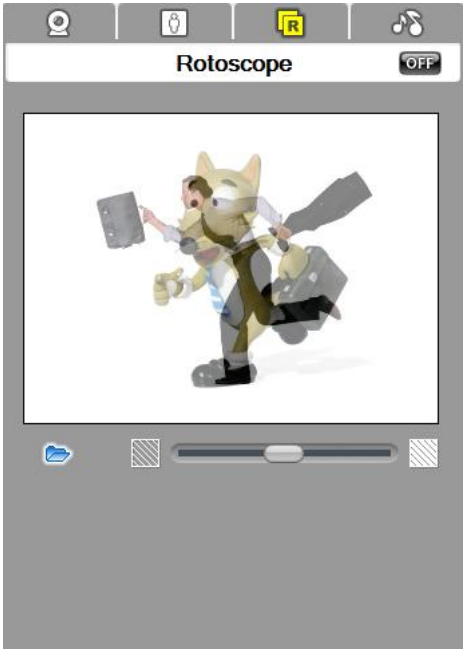
   E. Click to browse and select background image.

   F. Click to add the image to the Storyboard. The view screen will switch to capture mode.

5.7. Rotoscope

If you need help in setting up your figure, the "Rotoscope" option allows you to view a still photo on top of your subject. You can use this feature to line up the images, and then capture a frame using the capture button.

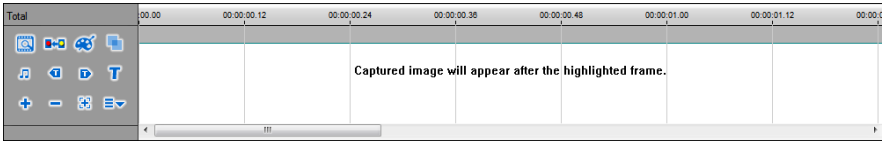
1. Click to access rotoscope options.



2. Click ON / OFF to switch rotoscope on/off.
3. Click to browse and select a picture that you want to import as a reference photo.
4. You will see the reference photo and the current frame of your figure in transparent overlay mode in the “Capture” window.
5. : Adjust the visibility between the two images.

Note: Onionskin will be disabled when using the rotoscope feature.

6. Storyboard



Storyboard Tools: Located at the left end of the Storyboard, these tools allow you to manage your frames/images in the Storyboard.

6.1. Full Storyboard

Click to view the Full Storyboard.

Click in the top right corner to expand the Storyboard to full screen.

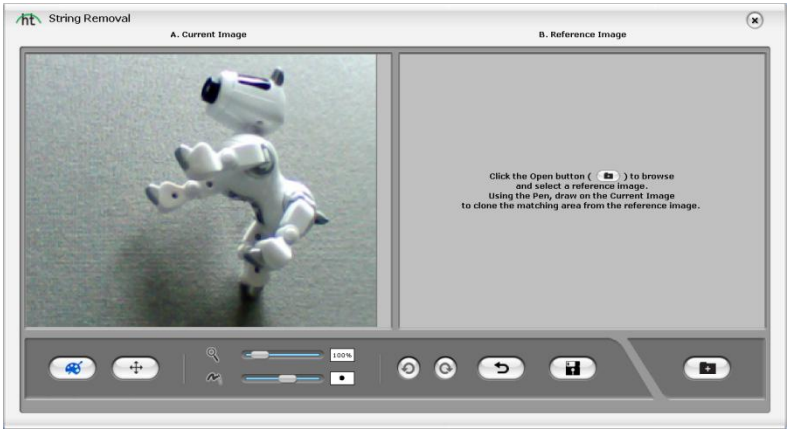
Click in the top right corner to restore the Storyboard from full screen to default size.

6.2. String Removal

Click to open the String Removal tool.

String Removal allows you to draw parts of a reference image onto a selected image in the Storyboard. This can be used to remove a hanging wire similar to how Hollywood movies appear to make people fly.
To start, select an image from the Storyboard, then click the String Removal button.

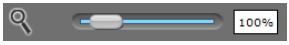
6.3. String Removal screen



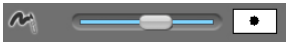
The String Removal screen features two panes, one for the Current Image and one for the Reference Image. The Current Image contains the image selected in the Storyboard. The Reference Image is selected from a saved picture.

Start by clicking to select a Reference Image. The Reference Image can be changed at any time. A cursor appears in both panes when working in the Current Image pane. The marker in the Current Image pane will clone corresponding spots from the Reference Image.

Adjust the Magnification and Marker sliders for more control.



: Magnification - Drag the slider to zoom in or zoom out of the images.



: Marker Size - Drag the slider to change the size of the Marker used for drawing.

Use the Change and Move mode buttons to switch between the drawing and moving tool/cursor.

: Change Mode - Select this mode to draw on the Current Image.

: Move Mode - Select this mode to reposition the images.

: Click to undo the last change to the Current Image. You can undo up to 10 times.

: Click to redo the last change to the Current Image. You can redo as many Undo operations you have made without saving.

: Click to clear all changes to the Current Image since the last save.

: Click to save all changes to the Current Image.

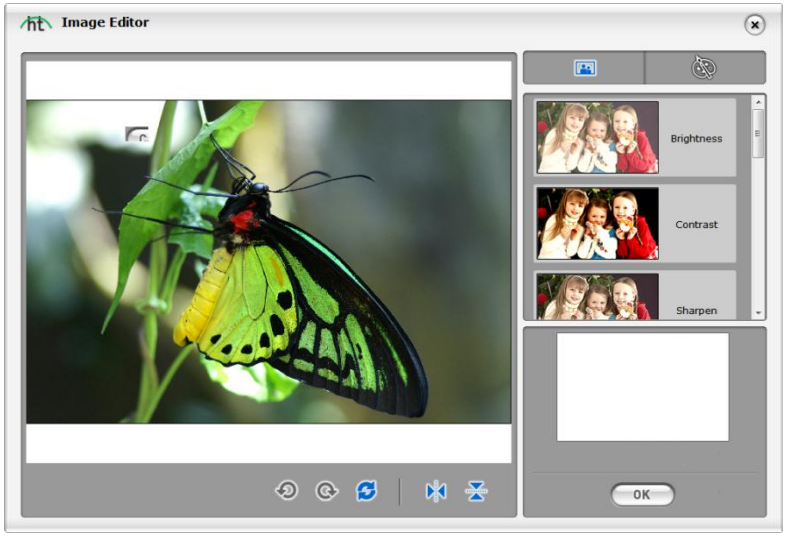
Click to exit String Removal screen when finished. When prompted, select 'OK' to save the changes or "Cancel" to exit without saving.

Note: Any changes that were saved by clicking *will remain saved.*

6.4. Image Editor

Click from the Storyboard Tools to open the Image Editor.

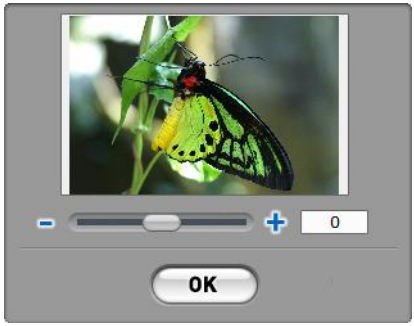
The Image Editor allows you to add effects or paint onto a selected image in the Storyboard.



To add an effect, select the Effects button at the top.
Select the Effect you wish to add to your image from the menu below the “Effects” Icon:

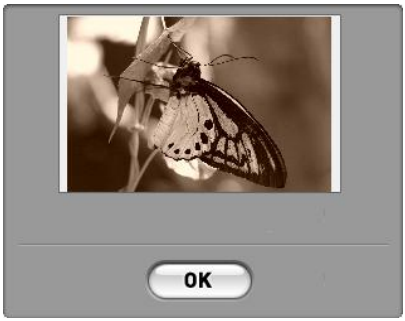
For example, if you wish to brighten your image, you will want to select “Brightness”:

Once selected, you may see the effects in the small Preview Pane located below the selectable effect options.

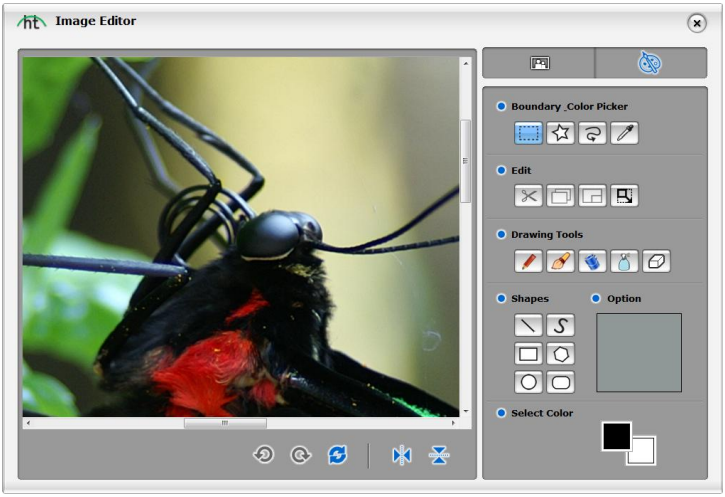


By adjusting the slider bar, you may increase or decrease the chosen effect’s impact on the image. For example, moving the slider to the far right will maximize brightness while moving the slider to the far left will minimize the effect.
Once set, select the “OK” button to have your changes take effect.

Some effects, however, such as the Sepia filter will not be adjustable with a slider underneath the Preview screen.



To paint or draw on an image in the Storyboard, select the Paint button at the top.



Boundary Color Picker

: Rectangular Selection

: Polygonal Selection

: Free-form Selection

: Color Picker

Edit

: Cut

: Copy

: Paste

: Magnify

Drawing Tools

: Pencil

: Brush

: Fill with Color

: Airbrush

: Eraser

Shapes

: Line Shape

: Curved Line Shape

: Polygon Shape

: Rounded Square Shape

: Square Shape

: Circular Shape

Option

: Adjust Shape Outline or Size

Select Color

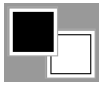
 : Select Primary and Secondary Color

Image History and Flip Tools

: Undo

: Redo

: Reset

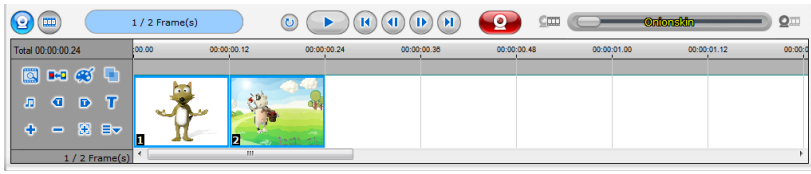
: Flip Horizontally

: Flip Vertically

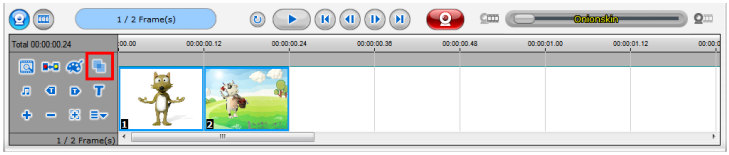
6.5. Overlay Frames

Click to overlay two or more frames in the Storyboard. This feature will allow you to merge two or more frames/images into one.

To get started, first select two or more original images from the storyboard.

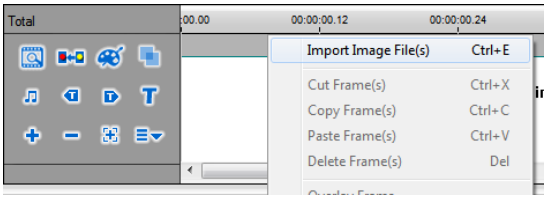


Then click the “Overlay Frames” button.



The Overlay Image will be processed and placed in the storyboard just before the frames selected for overlay.

6.6. Add Image Frame(s)

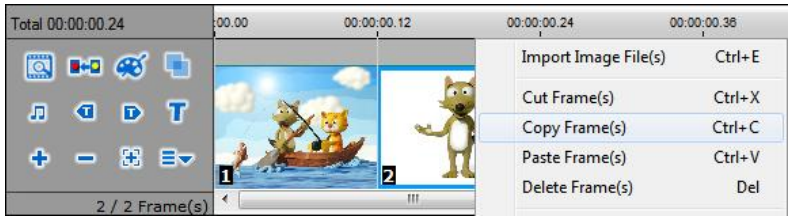


1. Click , or right-click on the Storyboard window.
2. Select “**Import Image File(s)**” from the context menu.
3. Browse and locate the image file(s) you want to add to the Storyboard. The selected image(s) will appear in the Storyboard.

6.7. Cut Frame(s)

1. Select the frame(s) in the Storyboard you wish to cut, and right-click on it.
2. Select "**Cut Frame(s)**" from the context menu (Hot-key: Ctrl + X).

6.8. Copy Frame(s)



1. Select the frame(s) in the Storyboard you wish to copy and right-click on them.
2. Select "**Copy Frame(s)**" from the context menu (Hot-key: Ctrl + C).

6.9. Paste Frame(s)

1. Select the frame in the Storyboard you wish to place frames before, and right-click on it.
2. Select "**Paste Frame(s)**" from the context menu to paste frames after the selected item (Hot-key: Ctrl + V).

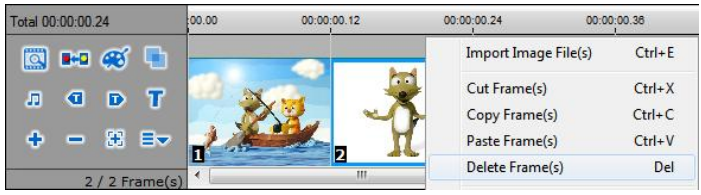
6.10. Moving Frame(s)

1. Select the frame(s) in the Storyboard you wish to move.
2. Click and hold, then drag the frame(s) to a different location.

3. Release your mouse button, and the frame will drop into the new location.

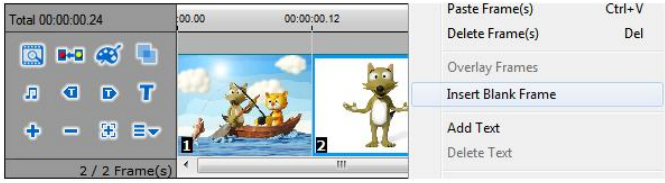
Note: Intro/Ending title frames cannot be moved to different location.

6.11. Delete Frame(s)

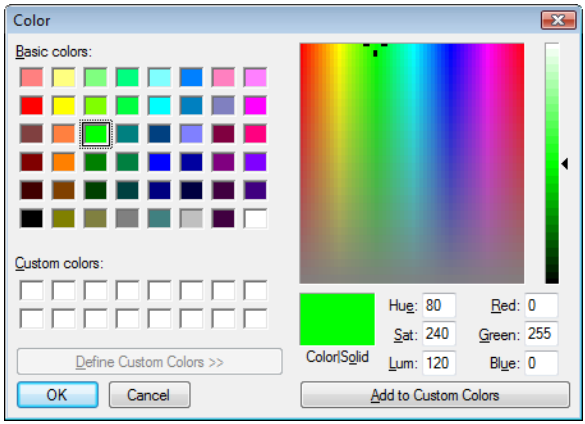


1. Select the frame(s) in the Storyboard you wish to delete.
2. Click , or right-click on the frame and select “Delete frame(s)” from the context menu. (Hot-key: Delete)

6.12. Insert Blank Frame



1. Select the frame in the Storyboard you wish to insert a blank frame before and right-click on it.
2. Select "**Insert Blank Frame**" from the context menu.
3. Select a color for the blank frame being inserted.

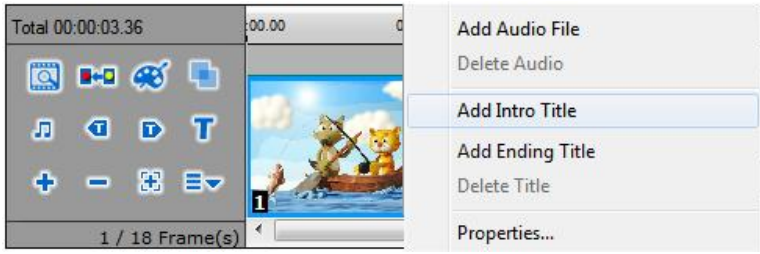


4. The blank frame will be inserted right before the selected frame.

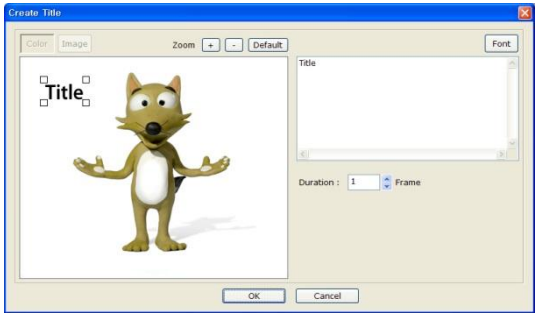
6.13. Add Intro/Ending Credits

Click from the Storyboard Tools or select "**Add Intro Title**" from the context menu to add an introduction title frame to the Storyboard.

Click from the Storyboard Tools or select "**Add Ending Title**" from the context menu to add an ending title frame to the Storyboard.



Enter text into the dialogue screen.



a) Move the text location within the frame/window by clicking on the text and dragging.

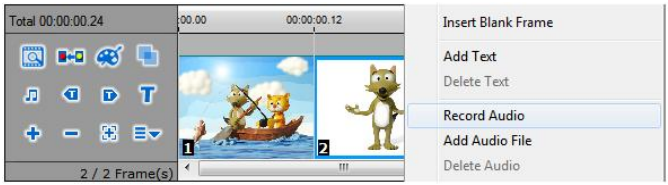
b) Enter text here. Click Font to change the font and size.

c) Select the duration of time for the title frame to display.

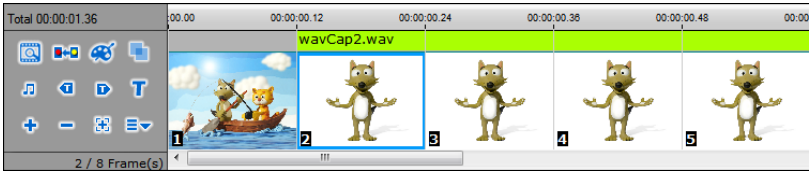
d) Select the background for the title frame. Click Color to change the background color, or click Image to select an image for the background.

7. Audio Recording

7.1. Record audio for voice-overs, sound effects, etc...

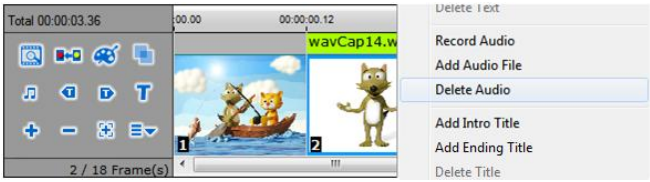


1. Select a frame in the Storyboard to start recording audio from, and right-click on it.
2. Select "**Record audio**" from the context menu.
3. Audio recording will begin after a 3-second countdown
4. When the recording begins, your project will play in the Preview window.
5. When you stop recording, the recorded audio will be added to the selected frame. The audio clip will be visible at the top of the Storyboard in green.



To delete audio recordings from your project/storyboard:

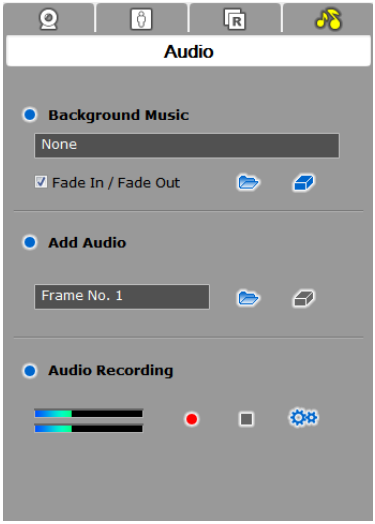
1. Select the frame in the Storyboard you wish to delete audio files from and right-click on it.



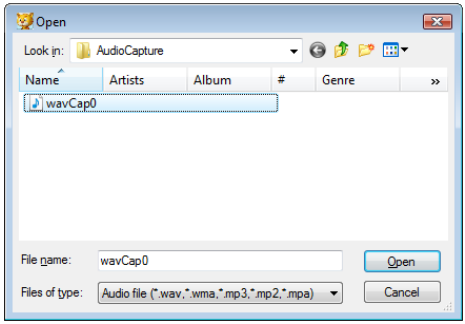
2. Select "**Delete Audio**" from the context menu.
3. The audio clip will be removed from the selected frame and top of the Storyboard.

7.2. Add Background Music

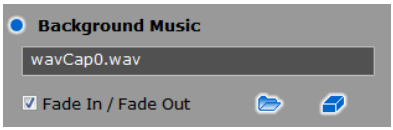
Add background music to enhance your animation.



1. Click to access audio options.
2. Click to browse and select an audio file you want to add.

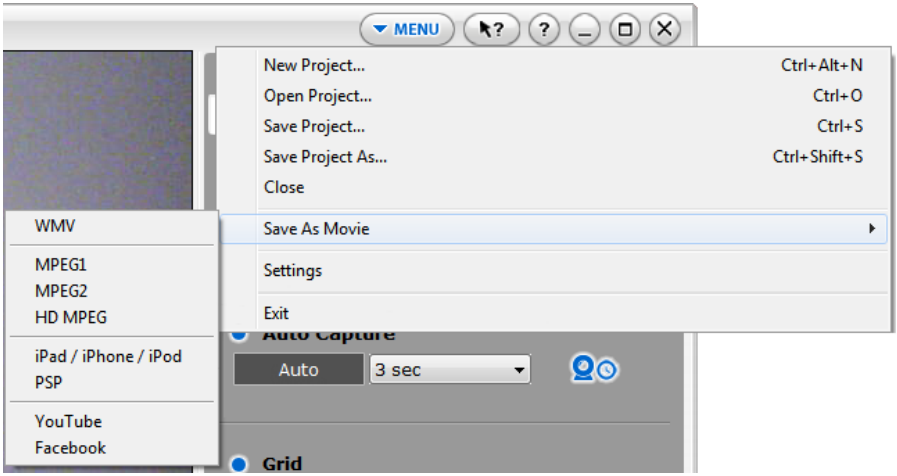


3. The selected audio file will become the background music for your stop motion video.



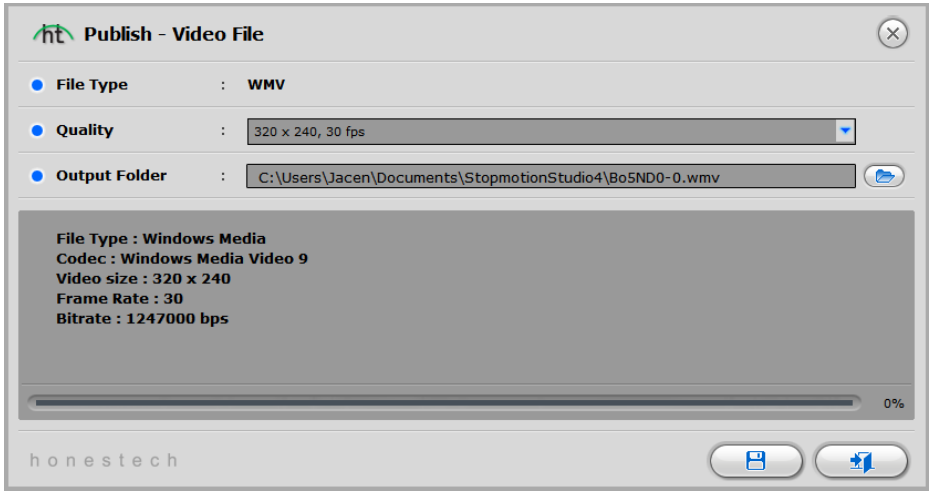
8. Creating Output

Create video output in the format of your choice.



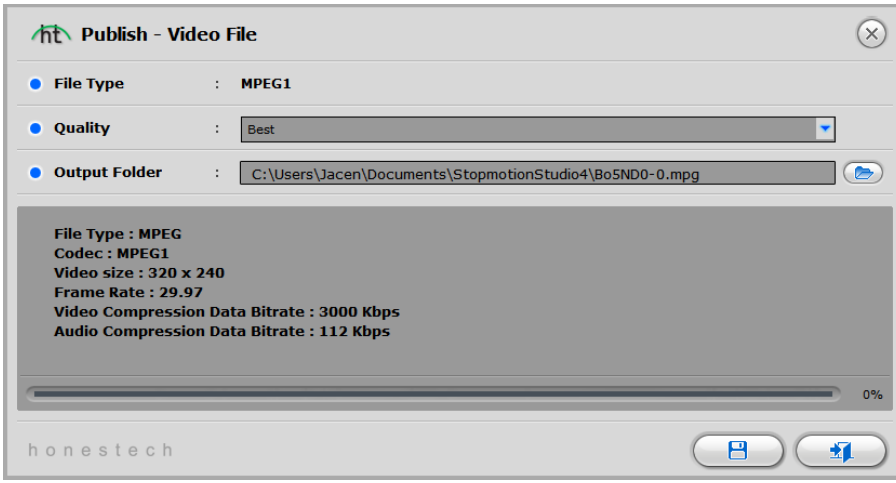
1. Click MENU and select '**Save As Movie'**.
2. Select output video format: **WMV, MPEG1, MPEG2, HD MPEG, etc.**
3. Output Formats:
    - WMV (Windows Media Video)
    - MPEG (MPEG1/MPEG2/HD MPEG)
    - iPad: this option allows you to save your Stopmotion as an MP4 file which can be transferred to an iPad.
    - iPhone: this option allows you to save your Stopmotion as an MP4 file which can be transferred to an iPhone.
    - iPod: this option allows you to save your Stopmotion as an MP4 file which can be transferred to an iPod.
    - PSP: this option allows you to save your Stopmotion as a WMV file which can be transferred to a PSP.
    - YouTube: this option allows you to upload your Stopmotion directly to the YouTube website.
    - Facebook: this option allows you to upload your Stopmotion directly to the Facebook website.

8.1. WMV Format Settings



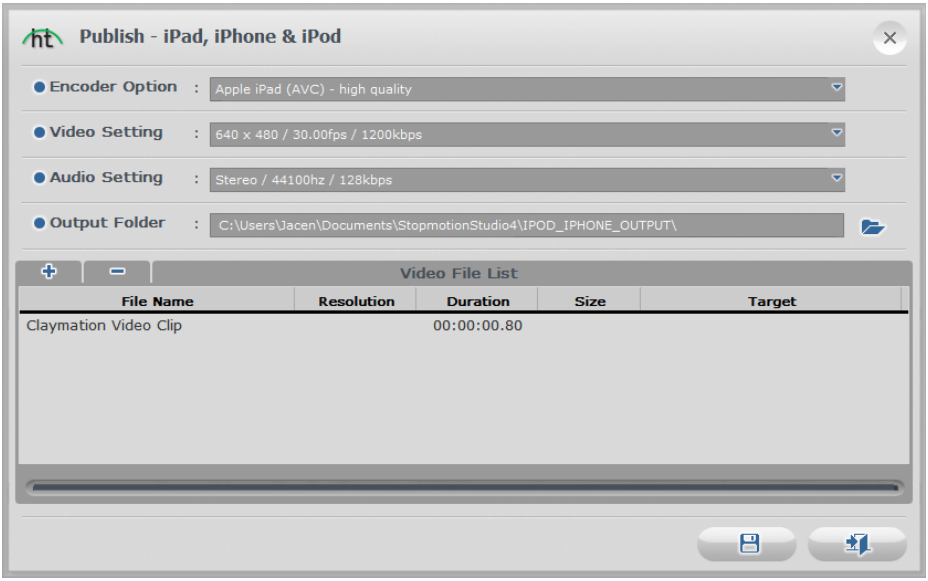
1. Select a quality setting. Higher quality setting will result in larger file size and longer processing time.
2. Select output folder (optional). Changing the output folder location is not recommended unless space is low on the current drive.
3. Click the Start button ( ) to create the video…

8.2. MPEG1, MPEG2, and HD MPEG Settings



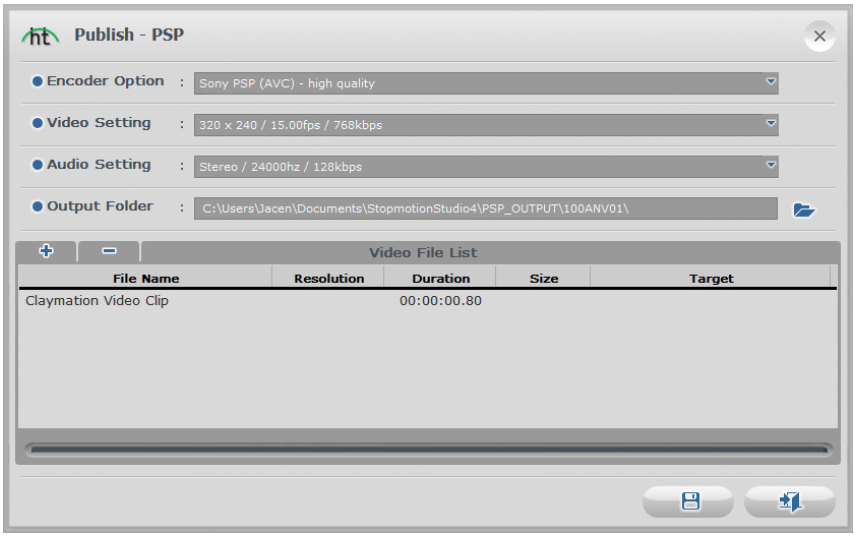
1. Select a quality setting. Higher quality setting will result in larger file size and longer processing time.
2. Select output folder (optional). Changing the output folder location is not recommended unless space is low on the current drive.

8.3. iPad / iPhone / iPod Settings



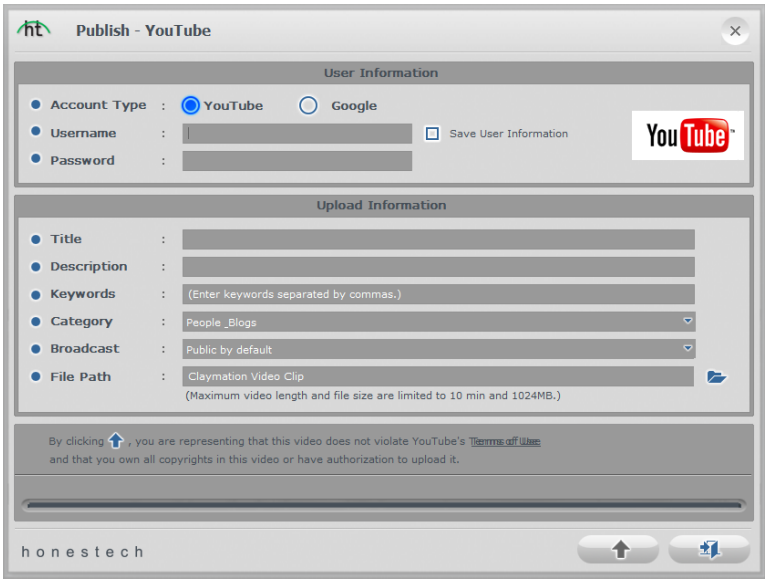
1. Encoder Option – select the format you wish to convert your video file into for iPad, iPhone or iPod compatibility.
2. Video/Audio Settings – select the Video and Audio settings for your video file that best meet your iPad, iPhone or iPod requirements.
3. Output Folder – Click the **Folder** button ( ) on the right to change the output folder location. Changing the output folder location is not recommended unless space is low on the current drive.
4. Click the **Plus** button ( ) to add additional video files to the list for conversion to the iPad, iPhone and iPod format.
5. Click the **Minus** button ( ) to remove any selected video files in the list.
6. Click the **Save** button ( ) to complete the conversion process.

8.4. PSP Settings

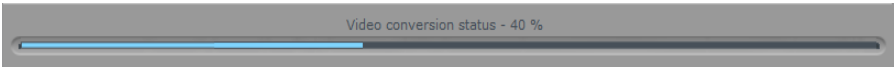


1. Encoder Option – select the format you wish to convert your video file into for PSP compatibility: MP4 or AVC. See your PSP documentation for more info.
2. Video/Audio Settings – select the Video and Audio settings for your video file that best meet your PSP requirements.
3. Output Folder – Click the **Folder** button ( ) on the right to change the output folder location. Changing the output folder location is not recommended unless space is low on the current drive.
4. Click the **Plus** button ( ) to add additional video files to the list for conversion to the iPod format.
5. Click the **Minus** button ( ) to remove any selected video files in the list.
6. Click the Save button ( ) to complete the ‘save to iPod format’ process.

8.5. YouTube Settings

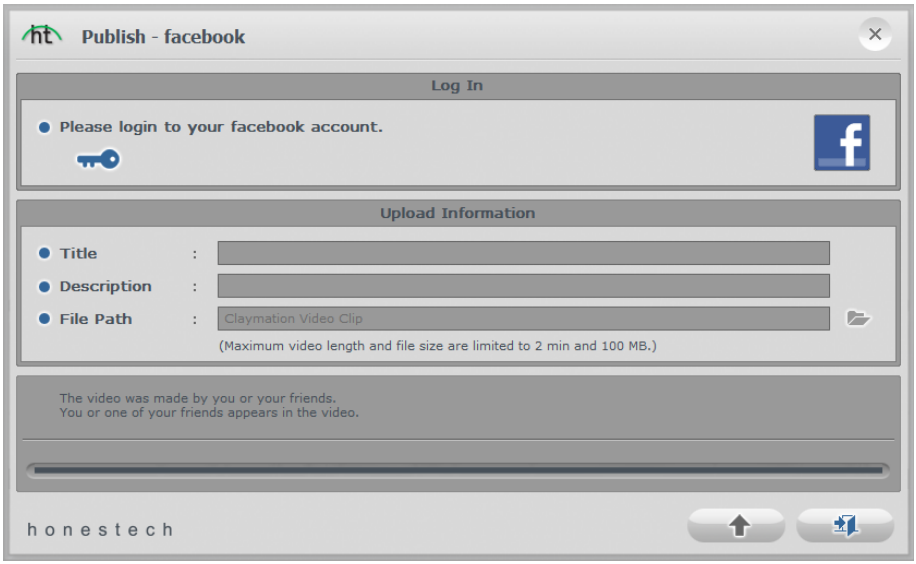


1. Account Type – select your account type – YouTube or Google.
2. Username/Password - enter your Username and Password for your YouTube or Google account.
3. Upload Information – enter information about the slide show you will be uploading to YouTube, including Title, Description, Keywords, etc…
4. Click the **Upload** button ( ) to begin the video conversion and upload to YouTube process. The Video Conversion bar at the bottom of the screen will display the conversion status.

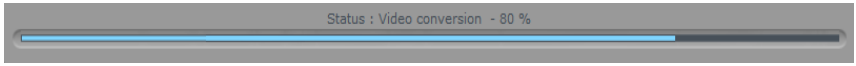


5. Click the **Stop** button ( ) to halt the video conversion and uploading process

8.6. Facebook Settings



1. Click the **Key** button ( ) to login into your Facebook account.
2. Upload Information – enter information about the slide show you will be uploading to Facebook, including Title and Description.
3. Click the **Upload** button ( ) to begin the video conversion and upload to Facebook process.
4. The Video Conversion bar at the bottom of the screen will display the conversion status.



5. Click the **Stop** button ( ) to halt the video conversion and uploading process.

9. Hot-keys

- Ctrl + E : Import image file(s)
- Ctrl + B: Controls the background volume.
- Ctrl + C : Copy
- Ctrl + V : Paste
- Ctrl + X : Cut
- [Del] key : Delete frame(s)
- [Home] key : Select the first frame
- [End] key : Select the last frame
- [<] key : Select the previous frame
- [>] key : Select the next frame
- Ctrl + G : Find specific frame (using frame number)
- Click on frame while holding Ctrl : Select multiple frames
- Click on frame while holding Shift: Select multiple frames that are in sequence.

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