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In The Director's Chair

Snazzi* VideoMaker

So...you fancy yourself a moviemaker? Out to create the Great Malaysian Movie, a knockout presentation video, or maybe a simple documentary? You've got a head start on many other budding directors of the past. When acclaimed *Lord of the Rings* director Peter Jackson got his start, he didn't have access to digital camcorders, desktop editing applications, DVD burners and MPEG 4 hardware encoders like we do today...no, he had to do things the hard way, with Super 8 and 16mm cameras, and dark messy editing rooms littered with tangled spools of celluloid film. Today, we're lucky to have video encoder packages like the Snazzi* VideoMaker to help us out.

The Snazzi* VideoMaker box contains audio and video cable adaptors, RCA cables, a USB 2.0 cable, a user guide, a software CD, and an unimposing little hardware encoder with Audio and Video input ports on one end and a USB 2.0 port on the other. Setting up is a no-brainer process of connecting the VideoMaker with your PC via USB cable, and hooking up A/V cables to the video capture device, and there's no need for a clumsy power supply or adapter, as the device is entirely powered by the USB bus.

Beginner-Level Filmmaking

Snazzi* Movie Studio VideoMaker, Muvee AutoProducer 3 and InterVideo WinDVD Creator 2, are all bundled in. These programs are the power behind the VideoMaker.

The first one that a would-be director might handle is Snazzi* Movie Studio VideoMaker, which captures video data right off the source, be it MPEG-1, MPEG-2 or MPEG-4 formats.

If you want to mix video with audio tracks, Muvee AutoProducer 3 can make things almost too easy. You can choose up to 75 video clips and audio tracks to assemble, and AutoProducer does the rest.

Last on the list is an authoring application that comes from the makers of my favourite DVD player, WinDVD. I'm talking about WinDVD Creator 2 from InterVideo, a for-beginners editing and authoring package, which is nonetheless the most comprehensive editor available here. Editing is performed through dragging and dropping clips, images, audio, transition effects and titles onto a Timeline or Storyboard. DVD menu authoring is performed in the same pass, so that you don't have to render until you have finished both editing and authoring stages.

Peter Jackson never had it this easy!

PC.com Verdict

The VideoMaker is a good amateur video editing package, but lacks depth for serious filmmakers.



→ Details

Warranty: 1 year
Price: RM830
Contact: Graphics Vision S/B
Tel: (03) 7727 1868
Fax: (03) 7729 1868
URL: www.graphics-vision.com

- MPEG-1/2/4 encoder
- USB 2.0 interface
- Suitable for creating DivX and MP4, as well as burning DVD, SVCD and VCD
- Snazzi* Movie Studio VideoMaker software for capture and review
- Muvee AutoProducer 3 for music video creation
- InterVideo WinDVD Creator 2 for one-pass video editing and DVD authoring