

ScreenShow[®] Pro

**Screen Capture
Video Recording
Software**

User Guide

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Introduction

Video is an essential part of modern communication. The world in general is attuned to visual communication, the most effective way of sending a clear message to the viewer. The saying, "a picture is worth a thousand words" has never been more true in our modern times. Video is the most powerful way to get your message across, and is even more effective when the video includes narrative speech.

ScreenShow Pro helps you achieve both. Whether you are creating a product demo, business presentation, training videos, or just want a simple and fast way to record what is on your screen, ScreenShow Pro is the best software to use.

ScreenShow Pro saves video files in standard AVI (Audio Video Interleave) format. This ensures maximum compatibility with other software, as AVI is a format editable in most current video programs. ScreenShow Pro lets you configure video and audio options for maximum compatibility with your current applications.

When you need to capture your on-screen activity, ScreenShow Pro is the perfect application for recording to standard AVI files. Record everything on your screen with just a few clicks of your mouse! Share your videos online, turn them into products, training, and more.

With ScreenShow Pro, you can:

- Create Product Demos
 - Record Software Presentations
 - Create Training Videos
 - Record Software Testing - recording steps taken for bugs, procedures, more
 - Track your progress for software development
 - Record Streaming Videos
 - Create Flash presentations from your AVI files
-

ScreenShow Pro Overview

System Requirements

Microsoft Windows 95, 98, Me, NT 4.0, 2000, XP
400 MHz processor
64 MB recommended
4 MB of hard-disk space for program installation.

Uses of ScreenShow Pro

There are many uses for ScreenShow Pro. Here are just a few of them:

You can create software demonstration by simply recording everything you (can) do with an application, from mouse movement to menu presentation and options demonstration and pretty much everything you can think of. You now have the chance to make a powerful presentation that will impress your audience.

You can create help files, assist trainings and build professional tutorials by simply explaining on-screen how everything works. ScreenShow Pro gives you the possibility to record yourself while you work or use an already recorded file to match your new recording.

You may want to upload a presentation of your software on your website to give it a more professional look and to establish a good communication between you and the user.

If you are testing an application, you can use ScreenShow Pro to record the exact moment when the bug occurs.

Or you can just use it in personal interest such as recording everything that happens while you're not at your computer, whether we're talking about tracking the progress of an application that runs for a long time or simply spying on other people using the computer, you can be sure ScreenShow Pro does its job.

The Screenshow Pro Main Screen

This is the screen you will see when you first launch the program:



ScreenShow Pro Modules Overview

Recorder - lets you capture your video:



SWF Producer - converts your generated AVI video to SWF / Flash format:



Player - plays videos:



Tools - online tools for Screenshow Pro

Extras - online extras for Screenshow Pro

Recorder Module Quick Start:

Press the REC button to begin recording. When you click the button, a flashing rectangle will appear. This rectangle helps you select the Region for recording.

STOP complete stops the recording. A dialog then appears so you can name the file and choose the location to save it.

Pause the recording at any time by pressing the PAUSE button. You can resume recording again by simply pressing the REC button.

You can also set shortcut keys for these functions using the Keyboard Shortcuts menu.

Video Basics

Every AVI movie is a sequence of bitmaps (known as frames). When you record a movie using the ScreenShow Pro you are actually saving this sequence of bitmaps which are then played in a rapid succession to give the impression of motion. The number of frames recorded per second is called the frame rate. If the frame rate is high the video will play smoother but the resulting AVI file will be larger in size.

There are 3 kinds of rates:

The input rate is the number of frames that your computer records in a second.

The output rate is the number of frames displayed in a second when you are playing the AVI.

The two rates are usually the same. However, you might want to play the video faster than you've recorded it, or, on the contrary, play it slower. In the first case you'll have to set the output rate to be bigger than the input rate, and vice versa for the second scenario.

The key frame rate. There are two ways of saving a frame in an AVI file: you can either save it as a full frame (a complete image) or you can save only the differences that occurred from the last frame. This key frame rate specifies how often full frames are written to the AVI file. A high value means you can fast forward/rewind to a particular frame in your movie much faster. But it also means a larger file size.

ScreenShow Pro's Recorder Module allows you to specify these video rates to match your exact needs. Video options will be reviewed in the Video Options section.

Cursor Options

Cursor options allow you to draw attention to the action your cursor is performing.



[Hide Cursor](#)

Allows you to hide the cursor during the recording.

[Show Cursor](#)

This will show the mouse cursor during the recording.

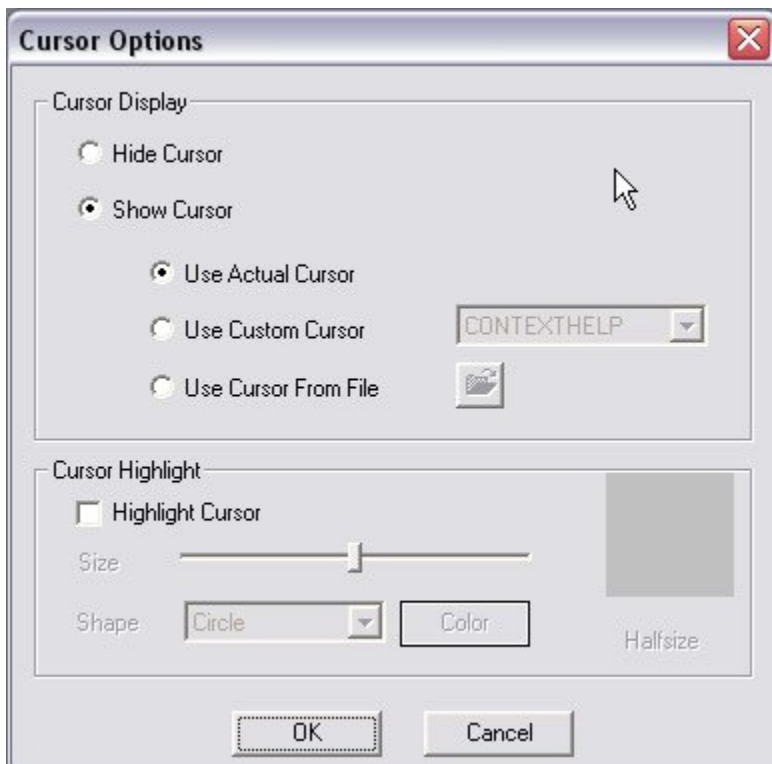
There are several cursors you can use:

1. Use Actual Cursor will use the actual shape and position of the cursor.
2. Use Custom Cursor allows you to select a custom cursor from the list on the right.

The "Use Cursor From File" option allows you to load a cursor from a file.

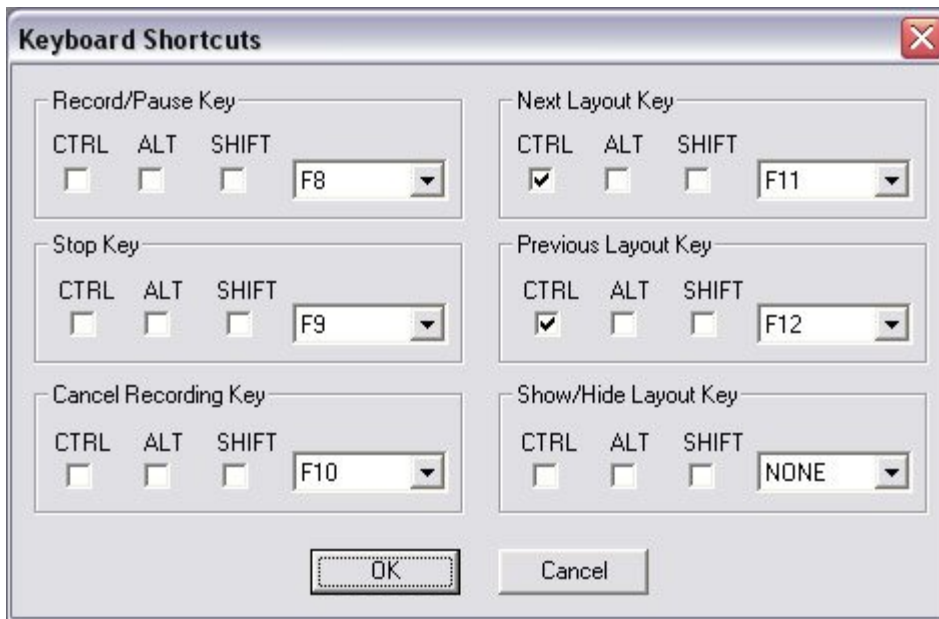
[Cursor Highlight](#)

You can use the Highlight Cursor option to color a defined area around the cursor. You can select the custom size by moving the slider and also choose the shape and color of the highlight area using the Shape and Color options. A preview of the cursor is shown in the box on the right; the preview size is half the actual size. When recording, the highlighted area will not appear around the cursor, it will only be shown when playing the video.



Keyboard Shortcuts

You may want to record a video without letting the ScreenShow Pro window appear in it. To do this you have the Keyboard Shortcuts option. They allow you to define hotkeys for starting, stopping, pausing or canceling a recording.



You can also define keys for operating with layouts, jumping to the next or previous layout and showing/hiding the current layout. Please see the Layout section to learn more about layouts. You can choose any keys and any combinations using the CTRL, ALT and SHIFT keys.

You can access the Keyboard Shortcuts menu by choosing the Tools->Keyboard Shortcuts. (as shown in the image below)



Autopan

When this option is selected the fixed area defined in the Regions Settings will follow the mouse cursor wherever it goes.

Select the Enabled option in the Options->Autopan menu:



Setting the Autopan Speed

This controls the maximum speed at which the recording area follows the cursor. The value is expressed in screen pixels. If the number is small, the recording area will move very slowly thus allowing you to exit the recording area without being able to see that when you play the video. If you want to avoid that, you should set the speed to a higher value. On the other side, a value that is too high will cause the rectangle to actually jump from one point to the other and that is not really esthetic. Therefore, you should set the speed to a medium value.



Regions & How to Set

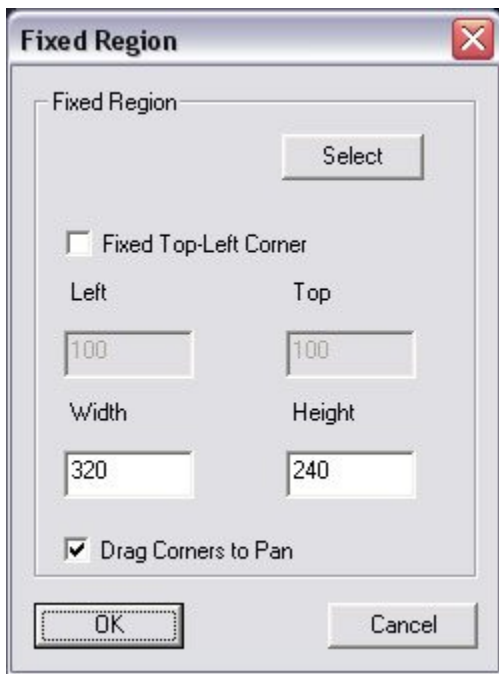
Before you start your recording, you should set up the recording region (the region on the screen which will be recorded in the video). You can set it up by choosing Record from the top menu. You can see 3 options:



Region

This option lets you choose a rectangle before the actual recording starts. The mouse pointer will turn into a cross-hair pen (⌵), allowing you to select an area of your screen. You can do that by clicking the left mouse button and dragging over the desired area.

Fixed Region



Full Screen

Full Screen mode records the entire screen.

Video Options

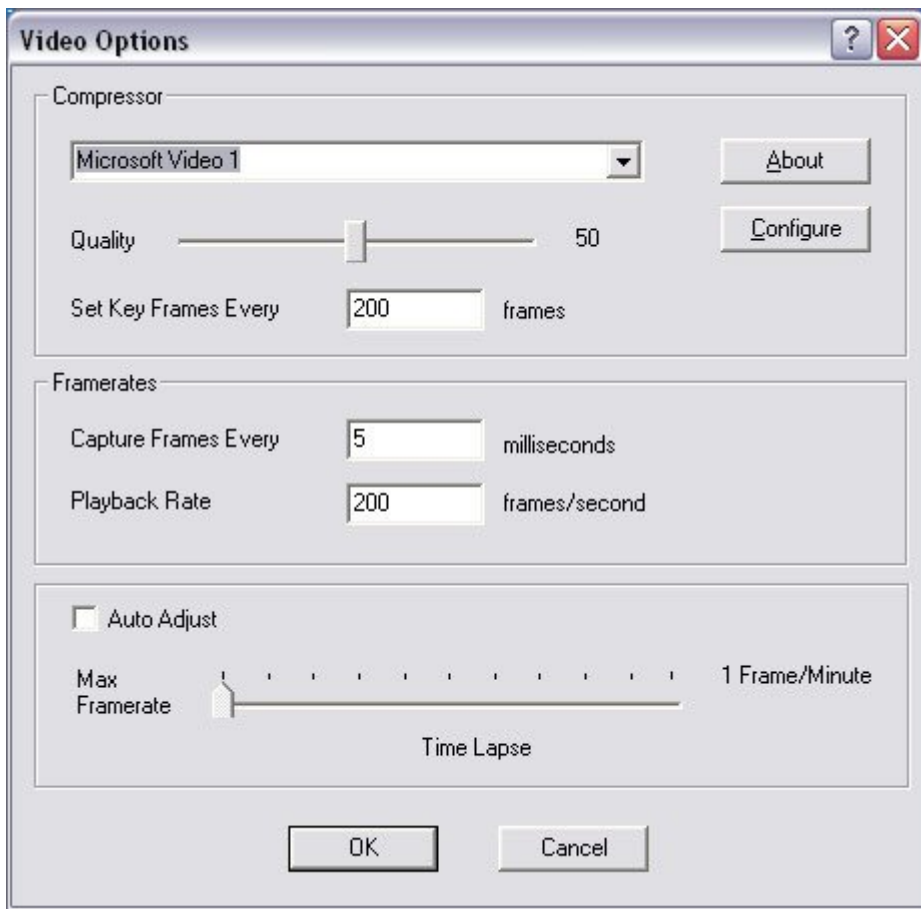
You can access the Video Options dialog box by choosing Options->Video from the menu bar.



Setting the video options allows you to optimize your video recordings by choosing between the file size, quality and frame rates of your video files.

The Compressor

The select-box allows you to select the encoder for your AVI file. An encoder compresses your AVI files to make them smaller in size and cause them to play faster. The default setting is the MS Video 1 compressor.



Configure

You can click this button if you want to configure the parameters of your selected compressor. You should, however, be very careful what changes you make for it may cause the ScreenShow Pro software to behave unpredictably or degrade its performance. You should know exactly what you're doing when adventuring to change the compressor's parameters. For some compressors, clicking this button will not have any effect.

Quality

This determines the quality of your video. A lower quality means a smaller file size.

Set Key Frame

As discussed above (Video Basics), this field lets you specify how often full frames are written to the AVI file. This has a direct impact on the file size and the video quality. It also determines how fast you can fast forward and rewind to a specific frame when watching the video.

Capture Rate

This will determine the number of frames that ScreenShow Pro captures every second (the input rate).

Playback Rate

The playback rate allows you to specify the number of frames played back in a second (the output rate). The typical frame rate for both input and output is 20 fps (frames per second).

Auto Adjust

Use the Auto Adjust settings to set the Key Frame Rate, Capture Rate and Playback Rate automatically through the slider. Shift the slider to the left to increase the frame rate and to the right to reduce file size. If the slider is situated at the right of the Time Lapse indicator, it means you are creating a time-lapse movie.

In Time Lapse mode, ScreenShow Pro will usually capture a frame only after a long period of time. However, during playback, the frames will be displayed more quickly.

Audio Options

You can also choose to record a soundtrack to go along with the movie you record. There are several options you can define.

To access the Audio Options dialog box select Options->Audio from the main menu:



Recording Audio from Microphone

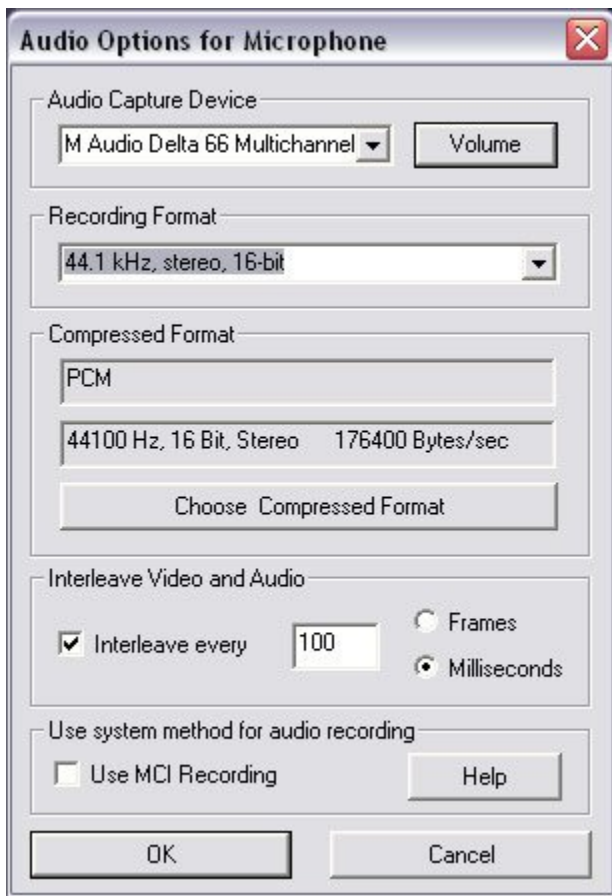
You can choose the Record Audio from Microphone option. When this is enabled you will be able to record your voice (or anything you want) using the microphone as the audio recording device

Do Not Record Audio

You can also choose to have no audio for your movie. You can do this by choosing the Do Not Record Audio option.

Setting Audio Options for Microphone

To set up your options when recording with a microphone you will need to select the Settings... options from the menu shown above. It will allow you to set the recording format and the compressed format of your audio.



Recording Format

You have several options here. What you have to know in order to properly choose the desired recording format is that there are three attributes defining the format:

The samples-per-second (SPS) option (measured in kHz). In data conversion, an analog signal is converted to a stream of numbers, each representing the analog signal's amplitude at a moment in time. Each number is called a "sample." The number sample per second is called the sampling rate, measured in samples per second.

The mono/stereo option.

The bits-per-second (BPS) option defines the frequency at which bits are passing a given "point". For speech, the usual values are 8 and 16. This, however, is a poor quality if you want to record more complex sounds.

You should be aware that by increasing the SPS and BPS values you will also increase the size of the final file.

Compression

Aside from choosing the recording format, this option allows you to choose the format that will be saved with your movie. After the recording is done using the options in the Recording Format section, the audio will be compressed using the Compressed Format options. When clicking on the Choose Compressed Format button you will be asked to choose a format. You can either use a saved format from the Name list, or you can simply use a predefined format. You have a list of existing formats in the Format list and you can further describe the format you desire by selecting the Attributes (they are the same as the one discussed in the Recording Format paragraph above).

Interleave Video and Audio

You measure the Interleave Factor using frames or milliseconds. The interleave factor determines the amount of interleaving in your movie. Normally, this value is specified in number of frames. A value of 1 frame will mean full interleave. This will determine how smooth your movie will play. Larger values will mean less interleaving.

You can also specify the Interleave Factor in milliseconds. If you choose to interleave a movie every 100ms for a movie with a capture rate of 200 frames per second (capture frames every 5 milliseconds), the Interleave Factor will be equivalent to interleave every 20 frames.

Use system method for audio recording

It is advisable to use this option if you don't really know how to set up the recording options. If you experience low quality audio recording using your options in ScreenShow Pro you might want to check this option. You might get better results. It will use the system commands to (MCI Recording) perform the recording. When this method is selected ScreenShow Pro will ignore all the Audio Options for Microphone settings except the Interleave Factor.

Please note that you can set up the system input device in Control Panel->Sound and Audio Devices->(Audio Tab).

NOTE: Some sound cards disallow your system to record while another application is playing sounds. In this case ScreenShow Pro will issue an error when you attempt to record with the Record Audio option being enabled.



Audio and Video Synchronization

If the audio is not in phase with the video during playback, you have the possibility to synchronize them by using the Audio and Video Synchronization menu. You can access it by choosing Tools->Audio and Video Synchronization... from the context menu.

The SWF Producer is a program that converts AVI to flash. You can choose that option if you want to start the SWF Generator and convert your AVI to SWF.



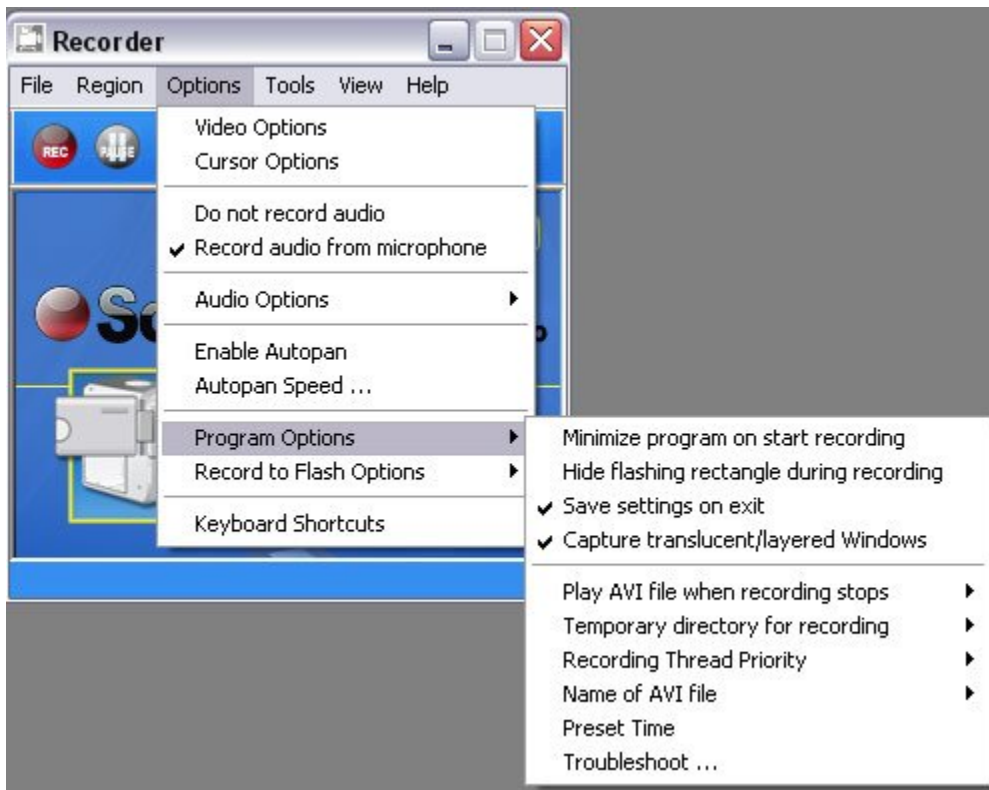
The default option is Do not shift the audio or video stream. You should change this only if you experience problems.

Note that the dialog only handles the case when the audio goes before the video, allowing you to delay the video recording, thus synchronizing the audio and video recordings.

The shift amount is measured in milliseconds. You can usually set the synchronization after viewing the video several times.

Program Options

The Program Options allow you to customize the program's behavior before/while/after the recording. You can access the Program Options menu by clicking Options in the menu bar and moving the cursor over the Program option. You can see the available options in the image below:



Minimize program on start recording

This option will automatically minimize the program to the system tray after the recording starts.

Hide flashing rectangle during recording

Normally, a flashing rectangle is displayed on the screen while recording your video. If this option is checked, the flashing rectangle will no longer appear during recording.

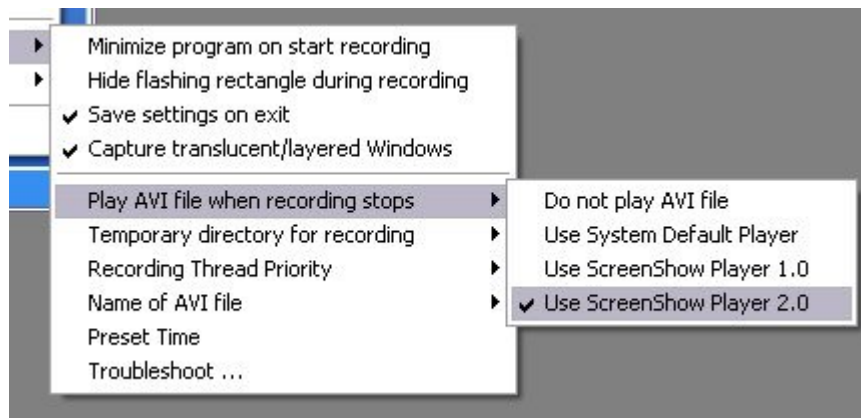
Save settings on exit

You have the choice to save all the changes you made to the program's options. If this option is not checked, the program will reset all the settings you made and return to the default ones.

Capture translucent/layered Windows

In Windows 2000 or XP, there are certain windows that are translucent/layered and cannot be captured without turning this option on. An example is the Office Assistant in Office 2000 or XP.

Play AVI File Options

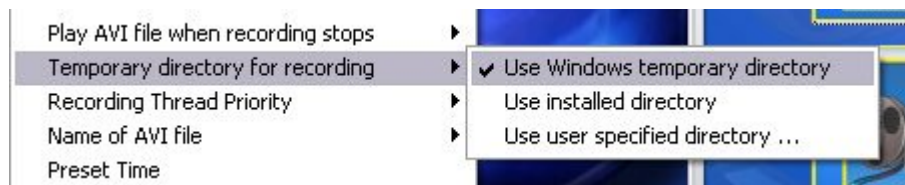


Options:

- Play the final AVI file immediately and automatically after recording
- Not play the AVI file after recording
- play the movie using your default player
- play the movie using the ScreenShow Pro Player

Temporary Directory for Recording

ScreenShow Pro creates temporary files while recording. These temporary files can become very large and crash your system if your system ran out of disk space.



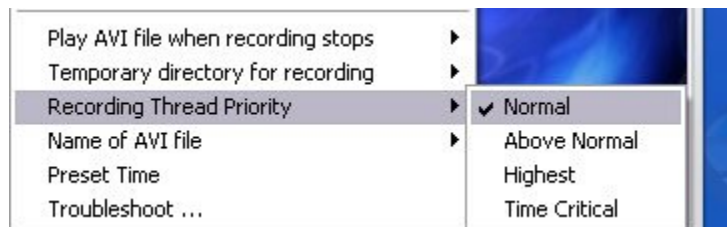
You can choose to save the temporary files in:

The Windows Temporary Directory

The directory where ScreenShow Pro is installed

Another directory that you specify

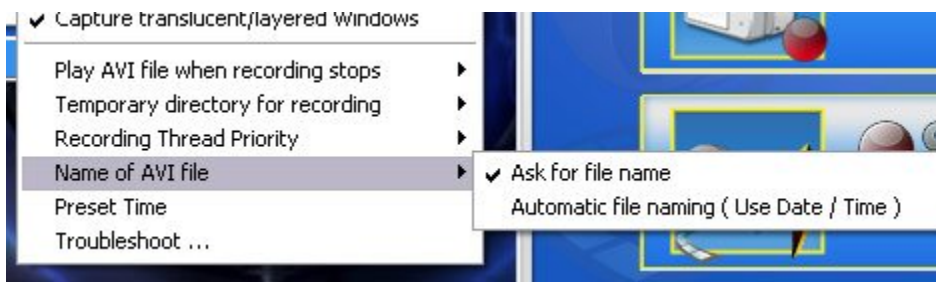
System Resources & Thread Priority



There are programs that use a lot of the system's resources. These programs can cause ScreenShow Pro to be unstable and the frame rate drops to about 0-5 fps. In order to avoid this, ScreenShow Pro can be set to have a higher priority than other programs. However, this will decrease some other programs' performance as well as causing Windows to stop responding. If you really want to record something and need to change this priority, you can set the value to Above Normal, Highest and Time Critical. However, it is best to leave this option with its default value, Normal.

Options for Naming the AVI file

You can choose to have the AVI file automatically named and saved after the recording stops or you can choose to have the program ask you for a name every time you make a recording:



With auto-naming, you can now avoid giving a name to every AVI you record. The name of the file will have the following format 1422005_1520_26.avi and is saved in ScreenShow Pro's installed directory. The name is constructed using the following rules:

the first string of digits is the date of the recording: 1422005 – 14th of February, 2005

the second string represents the time when the file was saved: 1520 – 3:20 PM (15:20)

the third number indicates the length of the movie: 26 seconds.

Preset Time

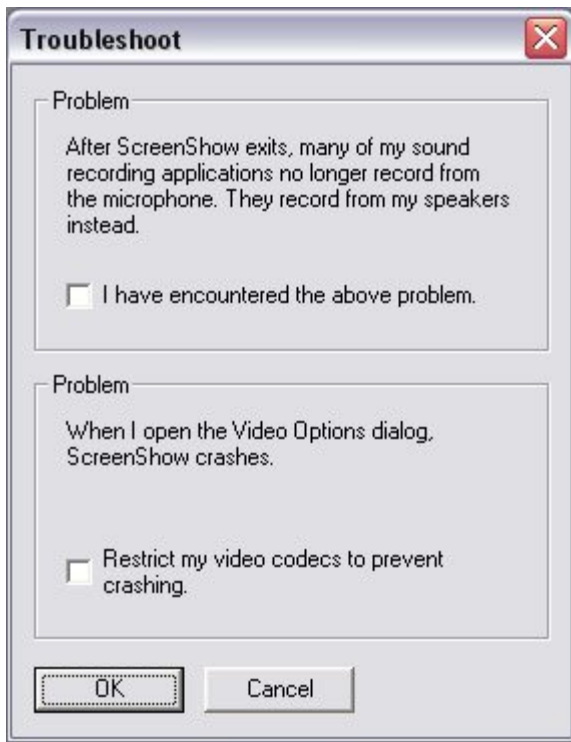
You can specify the length of your movie before you start the recording. In order to do this you have to check the “Stop recording after a period of” checkbox and then select a number of seconds using the up and down arrows:



Troubleshoot

There are 2 common problems that occur when recording with ScreenShow Pro, which are actually wrong settings. If you encounter one of these two problems, you can use ScreenShow Pro to automatically fix them and restore your system.

For the first problem, when the audio recording no longer works properly, you'll have to check the I have encountered the above problem box and click OK. You will be announced that the program needs to shut down in order to restore the settings.



For the second problem, when the program actually crashes you can simply check the box and click OK. The program does not need to restart. It's simply a codec conflict and ScreenShow Pro can restrict the video codecs in order to prevent the crash.

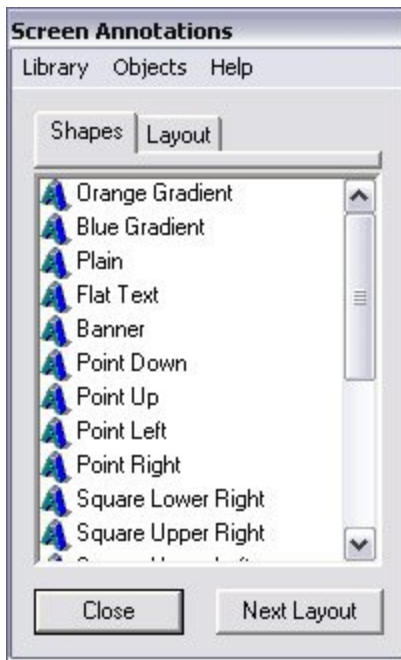
You may want to record a video without letting the ScreenShow window appear in it. To do this you have the Keyboard Shortcuts option. They allow you to define hotkeys for starting, stopping, pausing or canceling a recording. You can also define keys for operating with layouts, jumping to the next or previous layout and showing/hiding the current layout. Please see the Layout section to learn more about layouts. You can choose any keys and any combinations using the CTRL, ALT and SHIFT keys.

(You can access the Keyboard Shortcuts menu by choosing the Tools->Keyboard Shortcuts; see the section on Keyboard Shortcuts for more options in that dialog)

Screen Annotations



The Screen Annotations feature allows you to add captions to your screen during recording. To instantiate a certain shape (for example the Orange Gradient shape) you can simply click-and-drag it out of the Screen Annotations window.



This is an example of a Screen Annotation:



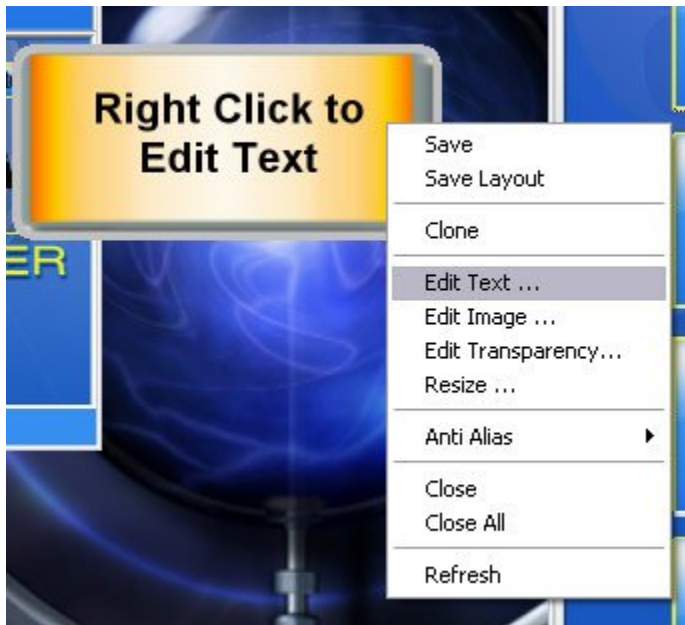
You can access the Screen Annotations menu by choosing Tools->Screen Annotations in the menu bar or by simply clicking on the Screen Annotations button:



The Screen Annotations option consists of two main components: Shapes and Layouts.

Shapes

Shapes are 'floating' boxes that appear on top of all other windows. It's composed of an image body where a image of your choice can be displayed and a text area where you can write whatever you want. You can see an example above. The uses of these shapes are pretty obvious: to explain certain parts of a video. You can write an additional explanation, a comment or make any kind of statement while the movie is playing.



Instantiating a shape

To create a shape, click and drag the shape out of the Screen Annotations window.

Editing a shape

You can access the edit option for a shape by right-clicking on it. A drop down menu will appear and you have several options.

Aside the actual editing options, you can choose to:

- Save – which will save the shape's appearance
- Save Layout – which will save the layout (read more about Layouts)
- Clone – which will make an exact copy of the shape
- Close – will close the active shape
- Close All – will close all the shapes on the screen
- Refresh – will refresh the shape if it is not shown correctly

Editing Text

Choose the Edit Text... option. The Text Properties window will appear:



In this window, you can edit:

The text message

Font options

Text Color

Alignment

Language/encoding (if you need specific characters; this feature is only available on Windows XP/2000)

When you choose the Edit Text... option you will notice that a dotted rectangle appears around the text:

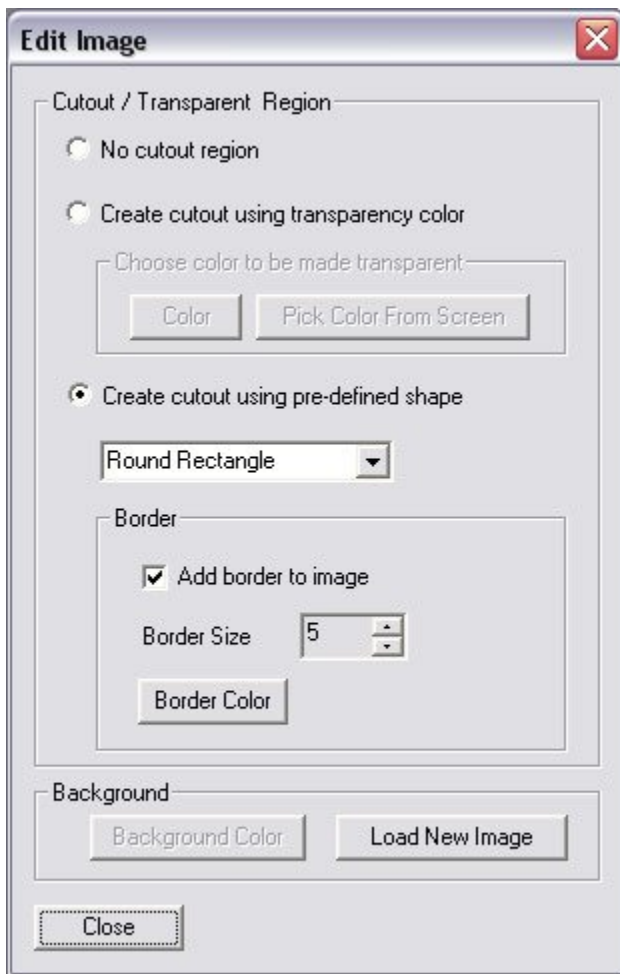


You can move the rectangle by dragging it with your mouse, or you can resize it by dragging the edges/corners.

Editing an Image

Using this option you can set the options for the background image as well as the options for the cutout region of the selected shape.

Select Edit Image... from the shape menu.



You can choose from:

1. No cutout region.

The shape will display as-is.

2. Create cutout using transparency color.

This will create a cutout region by selecting a transparency color (similar to an alpha channel in Photoshop). If you specify a color, all areas of that color will be made transparent allowing you to see the background.

In the example below, the selected transparency color is Black.



The image above will then look like this:



3. Create cutout using pre-defined shape

You can create a transparent region around the shape using a pre-defined shape: Round Rectangle, Ellipse and Rectangle.

When using the Round Rectangle option, the first image above will display like this:



You can also add a border to the shape. If we use a Red Border Color and specify a Border Size of 5 pixels, the image displays like so:



4. Background

If the shape has no background image you can choose a background color by clicking on the Background Color button.

If the shape has a background image you can load an image for the background by clicking on the Load New Image button. The accepted formats are GIF, BMP and JPG.

Editing Transparency

Select Edit>>Transparency

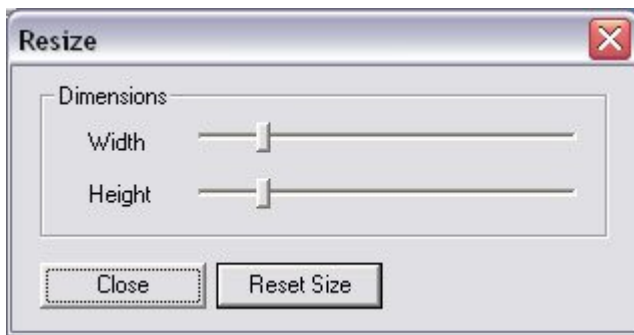


You can change the shape's transparency if you want to be able to still see the background. This option is only available in Windows 2000/XP

NOTE: If you choose to enable the Transparency option you should be aware that it will affect the frame rate causing it to drop significantly. Also, if you want the shape to be captured properly during recording you should enable the Capture Translucent/Layered Window option in the Program Options menu.

Resizing Shape

Select Resize... from the context menu to resize the shape.

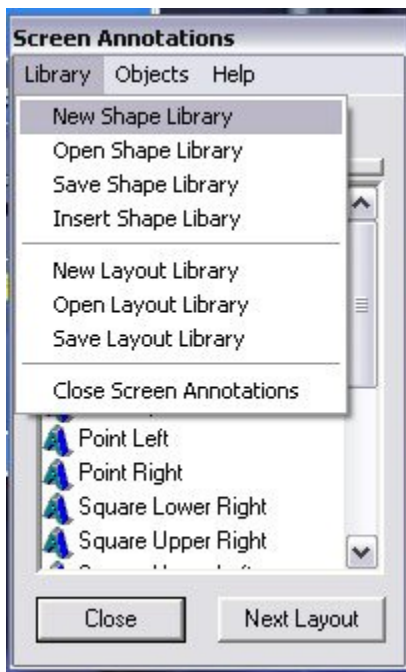


You can specify the Width and Height by moving the slider and you can return to the original size of the shape by clicking the Reset Size button

NOTE: A larger shape will be drawn and displayed very slowly.

Managing Shapes

You have the choice to set the library options by choosing the Library menu in the menu bar. The options:



New Shape Library – creates a new empty shape library. You can create new custom shapes to populate this new library

Open Shape Library – opens a shape library from an existing file

Save Shape Library – saves the opened shape library for future use

Insert Shape Library – adds the shapes from an existing library to the library that is currently open

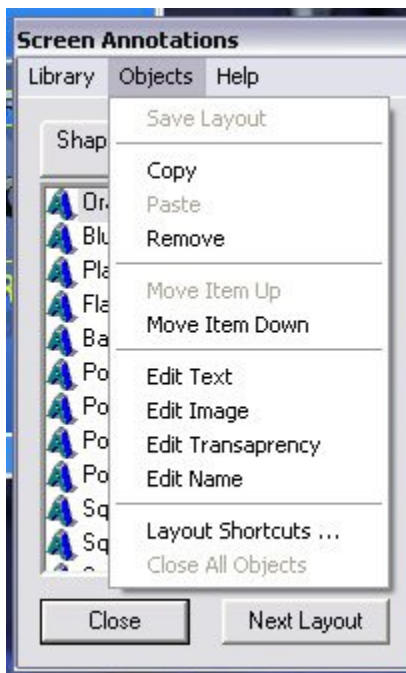
New Layout Library – creates a new empty layout library

Open Layout Library – opens an existing layout library from a file

Save Layout Library – saves the current layout library

Close Screen Annotations – closes the window

You can also set up some object options using the Screen Annotations' Objects menu. Aside from the editing options which were discussed above, you can set up the following options:



Move Item Up – moves the selected shape/layout one position up in the list

Move Item Down – moves the selected shape/layout one position down in the list

Copy/Paste – classic copy/paste option

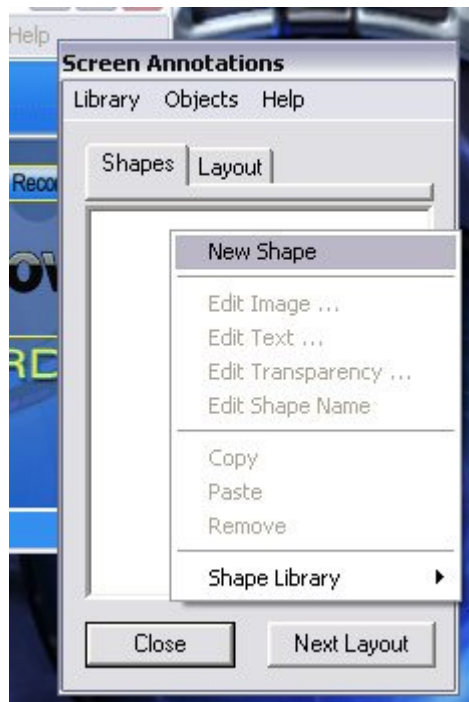
Remove – you can choose to delete an item in the list

Layout Shortcuts – you have several layout hotkeys you can define. You can also set these up using

the Keyboard Shortcuts menu. The available options will be discussed in the Layouts section.
Edit Name – allows you to choose a different name for the selected shape. You can also do that by selecting a shape and pressing the F2 key.

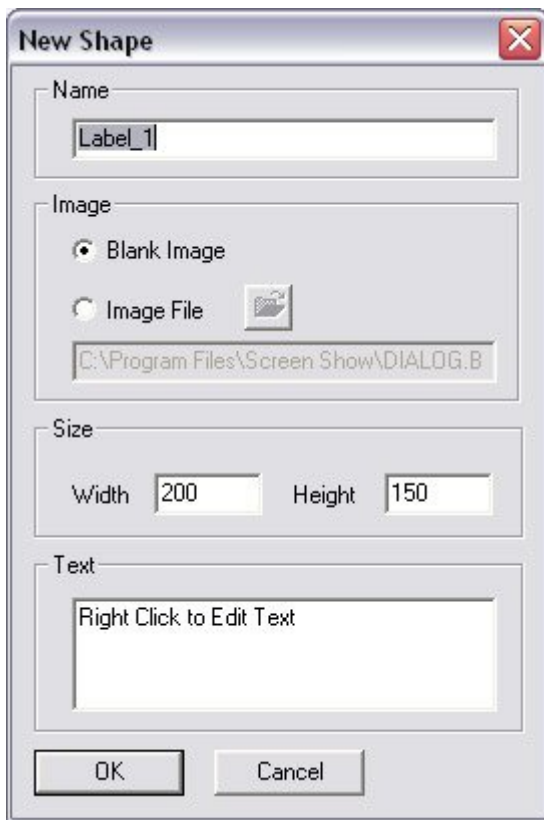
Creating a New Shape

By right-clicking the shapes box you have the option of creating a new shape as shown below:



You can see that you also have here the same options as the ones discussed in the Managing Shapes section.

When you select the New Shape option the New Shape window will appear:



This window lets you:

- Choose a name for the new shape you're creating

- Specify what background you want to use. You can choose to have a Blank Image as your background, allowing you to further change the background color in the Edit Image menu (see Editing Images). If you choose to have an image as your background you will have to browse to the image file.

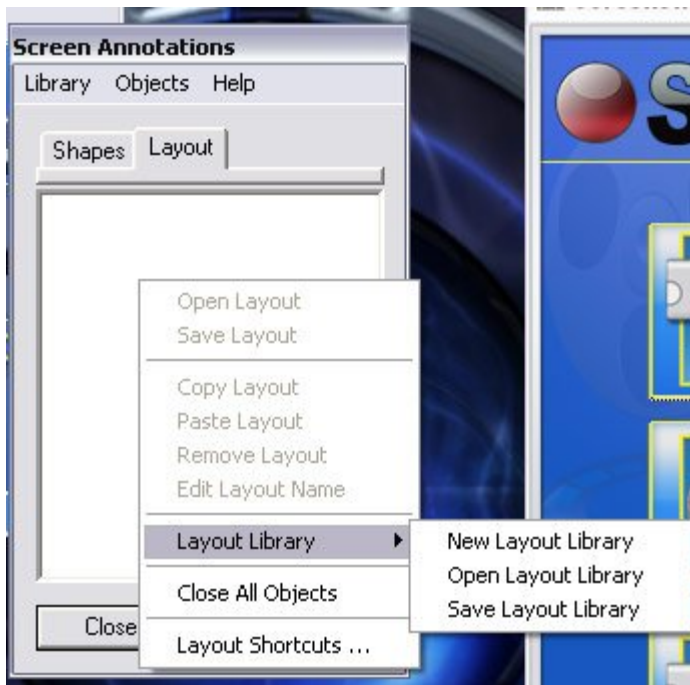
- Choose the size of your shape

- Enter the text that you'd like to be displayed

Layouts

A layout is just the arrangement of one or more shapes on your desktop.

You can access the layout menu by selecting the Layout tab in the Screen Annotations window.



You must prepare all your layouts before recording starts. The layouts will be arranged in a list. This list determines the order in which they will appear on the screen. When recording you can switch between layouts by pressing the chosen hotkey for next/previous layout. You can select the desired key combination in the Keyboard Shortcuts menu. This cycling between layouts will determine the right shape to appear at the proper time in the right position (layout).

You can right-click a certain layout to display a drop-down menu for the selected layout. You have the same options here as you had in the shape menu: Copy, Paste and Remove, the name editing option and the Open Layout option for displaying the selected layout. You can also operate with the layout libraries. For more information on these options please read the Manage Shapes section.