

# Preface

Welcome to *Getting Results with MediaStudio Pro 8*: The essential, no-nonsense guide to video editing with Ulead's software. This book has been designed to be your guide to learning and using MediaStudio Pro effectively. Whether you're just starting out or you're an old veteran, the goal is for you to discover everything you need to improve your video editing skills with MediaStudio Pro.

## Why Getting Results?

Because getting results is the whole point. Software is a means to an end, not an end in and of itself. I'm sure very few of us started using MediaStudio Pro just for the sake of pushing clips around a timeline. No, we all wanted to produce videos. We all wanted to use the software to achieve a specific goal. We all wanted results.

While software documentation generally does a good job of describing the functionality of an application, it rarely ventures much past the basics. *Getting Results* goes far beyond that. Your standard documentation typically succeeds at explaining *how* to do something, but it rarely tells you *why* to do something. As you've probably already guessed, there is much more to video production than "this is how you create a title clip; this is how you change the volume of an audio clip." Mastery of the mechanics is only the beginning. There's an art to video editing which you will never be able to get out of the standard documentation. This isn't to say that documentation is worthless—quite the contrary. The documentation is an important first step. But it's just that: a first step.

## The Goal of this Book

Don't believe the marketing people. Flip through any video magazine and you'll see countless ads of how "easy" video editing has become. (I am not singling out Ulead; it's the entire industry. Nor can I blame the perpetrators anyway. I mean, how many products would ever be sold if advertising actually told the truth?) "Simply capture your clips, place

them on the timeline, click ‘Make My Video’ and you’re done!” How easy! While they may not be telling outright lies, they’re certainly guilty of leaving out a thing or two. They might as well say, “Just get some paper and a pen, start writing, and before you know it you’ll have your very first novel!” We all know there’s more to it than that.

The goal of *Getting Results* is to get past all that. The goal is to present the material in the most useful manner possible. It’s not written by the company, or their marketing department, or the magazines dependent on advertising revenue. I wrote it and I don’t have to answer to anyone except you. There will be no careful picking and choosing of words. I will tell it like it is, because I won’t help anyone by doing it any other way. When you’re done with the book, you’ll possess the knowledge necessary to accomplish whatever you set out to do with this product. And if MediaStudio Pro isn’t capable of what you want to do, you’ll be able to recognize this too. True mastery means knowing everything the product can’t do as well as everything it can.

## Intended Audience

*Video Experience.* While the knowledgeable video editor can certainly get helpful information from this book, it’s really aimed towards beginning and intermediate MediaStudio Pro users. Knowledge of other video editing tools is helpful, but not required.

It is also a fact that MediaStudio Pro is only one part of a three-part process: 1) you start with your source footage; 2) you process this footage with MediaStudio Pro; and 3) you deliver your finished product. While I can assume that everyone reading this book is using MediaStudio Pro for the second part, I cannot assume that everyone will be using the same formats for the first and last parts. Your source footage may be old 8mm home movies or Hi8 camcorder tapes. You may wish to deliver your final video on VHS or upload it to your web site. Most of the time, this won’t matter. However, from time to time, it *will* matter, and I’ll try to make a point of that as we go.

*Computer Experience.* A basic working knowledge of Microsoft Windows is assumed. You should already be familiar with and comfortable using the computer’s operating system and performing common tasks. Launching programs, using the mouse, accessing menus, and dragging and dropping are just a few of the key skills needed.

You should also feel comfortable handling hardware. For example, if you haven’t already installed some sort of video interface, you probably will

soon. You shouldn't be afraid of plugging in cables and moving devices around from time to time—it's all part of the desktop video game. Be ready to get those fingers dirty once in a while!

## Conventions

There are a few conventions used throughout this book that you might want to make note of. Doing so now will give you a "heads up" and might help avoid a puzzle later on.

## Menu Commands

When the text refers to a specific menu *command* it will be written like this: Menu | Item | Subitem. The vertical bars ("|") separate the menu items. For example, File | Create | Video File means to click the "File" menu on the main menu bar, followed by the "Create" menu item, and then finally the "Video File" menu item.

## Exercises

Most exercises list both an Objective and one or more Reference Projects. The *Objective* is just that. It answers the question, "What in the world would I get out of doing this exercise?" The *Reference Project(s)* name the corresponding project files on the CD. These are provided so you can check your work or examine techniques more closely. Typically, you'll do the exercises on your own first, and then cross-check your results afterwards.

The original location of these files is in the top-level `projects` folder on the CD. Projects are divided by chapter, and the chapter folders project files, media clips, and everything needed to complete the exercises. It's recommended you move these files from the CD to your PC, following the directions on page 112.

## Use of Color

Certain illustrations or diagrams may require color to be properly viewed. If you are reading the book and something doesn't look quite right, please refer to the PDF for a full color view. The entire book in PDF format can be found on the accompanying CD.

## Margin Icons

Throughout the book, you will find small pictures in the margins of the pages. I use these to draw attention to a certain subject being covered at that point, which might not normally stand out on its own.



This icon means an important piece of information is being given, and you should make special note of it. It is typically information that is critical to the given task. Skipping over this would likely mean not being able to correctly finish the task.



Like the hand icon, this “thumbs up” represents an important piece of information. However, it is not critical for continued processing. It is simply something to take note of—something that might be helpful. But you’ll live if you happen to miss it.



This icon is used to visually identify the beginning of an exercise or project. Scanning through pages is easier with a visual indicator at the beginning of each exercise. Make sure you don’t skip over these. They’re the whole point of the book!



This icon identifies an online link or resource. For example, if someone else has written a good tutorial on the given topic, then a link will be placed in the document and noted with this icon.



While this book is more or less aimed at beginners, I have to admit sometimes I go off the deep end. Some readers may eat this stuff up. Others might not care at all and just want to get on with the task at hand. For this reason, we have the *Geek Alert*. If you see this symbol, you can safely skip to the next section. If you’re like me, however, and love the nitty-gritty details, read on!