PhotoMorph 2 v2.02
OEM Edition
Readme File

Common Questions

A. Will PhotoMorph 2 run under Windows 95?

Yes, although there are a few issues that you should be aware of.

1. The Screen Capture Utility does not function properly.
2. Some "drop down lists" use scroll bars to access some of the items.
3. There is no need to install the Video for Windows runtime, it is included in Windows 95.
4. The Manual.wri file does not print properly in WordPad.

Please note that PhotoMorph 2 is a "16 bit" application and does not take advantage of Windows 95's features such as long file names and OLE. For those who wish to take advantage of Windows 95, we offer upgrades to our Windows 95 version of PhotoMorph, PhotoMorph 2. See Upgrades.wri for more information.

B. How do I make Alpha Channels masks like the HORSE32.TIF sample image?

PhotoMorph supports 32 bit Alpha Channel images created in applications such as Photoshop(tm). However, because of PhotoMorph's masking features, any image editor (even the Paintbrush that comes with Windows) can be used to create alpha channels.

1. Load the image you want to mask into the image editor of your choice.
2. Paint black where you want the image to be transparent. Paint white where you want the image to be opaque. Save this as a new filename. (i.e.: MASK.BMP)
3. Enter PhotoMorph 2. Load the original image into the start window. Press Options (next to Edit). In the lower left hand corner under Alpha Masks, a mask can be specified for the start or end image. Use the load file button next to start mask to load the mask created in step 2. Press OK.

This links the mask created to the image loaded into start. Any Alpha Channel effect can now be applied. See the section titled *Advanced Topics I* in the manual for more information, including a complete tutorial on Alpha Channels.

C. Which buttons load which types of PhotoMorph Files?

PhotoMorph uses many different file formats. The first type uses the extension .PMP which stands for PhotoMorph Project. A PhotoMorph Project file contains the information to make the morph. (Points, filenames, etc.) There are a number of .PMP's that ship with PhotoMorph (CHRIS2ED.PMP, ALPHA1.PMP, etc.). PMP's are loaded and saved using the large file folder in the upper left hand corner of the project editor. Only .PMP files can be loaded

and saved with those buttons.

Image file formats (like .JPG, .PCX, .BMP) are loaded using different buttons. Under the Start and End image windows you will see a small file folder button located next to the words <<No Image>>. Use these buttons to load your images. As you cannot load images when you press the load project button, you cannot load projects when you press the load image button.

Finally, PhotoMorph creates Digital Video in the .AVI file format. To create digital video, press the Create Animation Button after you've set up your morph. You will be presented with a Save As dialog box to save your video as an .AVI. Once the video has been created, load the AVI into the AVI player. The AVI Player is accessed from the Project Editor; the button that looks like a movie projector. PhotoMorph can use AVI files as source material just like images; the only difference is that AVI files change over time.

As you can see, there are many types of files that PhotoMorph uses: Projects, Images, and Video. To help keep them all straight, PhotoMorph has different buttons to load each type of file. Understanding which button to press to load the type of file desired will become second nature with just a little practice.

D. The sample files: CHRIS26.AVI, and EDIE26.AVI; how were they created and why do they look so washed out?

They were created by videotaping Chris and Edie spinning on a stool in front of a Blue Screen, digitized into the .AVI file format using a video capture card, and compressed so that they would fit on our distribution disks. Because of the heavy compression required to fit them on a disk, the .AVI files appear washed out. This is not due to any of the processing in PhotoMorph.

E. Why does my finished video look poor?

There could be a number of reasons. All of the following items can lead to poor video:

1. Not displaying 24-bit color.

   AVI video files are usually 24-bit color. Just like a 24-bit image will appear washed out if only 256 colors are being displayed, a 24-bit .AVI file will appear washed out on a 256 color system. Use the Windows Setup icon in the Main group to determine how many colors your system is currently displaying and to make adjustments. Contact your computer manufacturer for more information. For those who wish to remain in 256 colors, PhotoMorph will output to .FLC files which contain only 256 colors.

2. PhotoMorph Quality Setting.

Use the Animation Parameters Button to open the settings for Output, Compression and Quality. Setting the quality to high increases rendering time, but significantly increases the quality of the output.

3. Video Compression Issues.
   To play back properly, Microsoft Video for Windows .AVI files need to be compressed. There are three main compression algorithms: Use Indeo for all general purpose video. If artifacts like bleeding or smearing appear, switch to Cinepak. If all else fails try Video1. Certain video capture cards come with their own compressors and others are available from 3rd party vendors. Any 24-bit compression that is installed on your computer can be used by PhotoMorph.

F. Are there any known incompatibilities with ATI video cards?
   Crashes will occur when using ATI video cards with Indeo 3.2 compression. ATI has fixes available for its current line of video cards. Contact ATI for more information. Otherwise, you can choose Indeo 3.1 or Cinepak compression. Indeo 3.2 can be found either on the Compuserve PhotoMorph support forum or in Video for Windows 1.1D.

G. "Clip # is incomplete, cannot be rendered", What does that mean?
   This message indicates that one of clips in the storyboard is not complete. For example, a morph requires start and end materials. If the end image window is blank, and morph is chosen as the effect, this error message will appear. To correct it, examine each clip in the storyboard carefully for any incomplete effects. Be sure to check each effect layer as well.

H. How do I save a single frame?
   Use the Preview Window to create the desired image and then save it to a new window or directly to a file. Use the new window button in conjunction with the File... Print menu to print any frame in the clip.

I. Why AVI files fail to work correctly as source material?
   Certain AVI compressors cannot be used as source AVI's for other animations because they use a custom temporal compression technique where only the changes from frame to frame are stored. When a single frame is loaded from the AVI file, the frame does not contain the entire image.

J. How can I play my videos at full screen?
   The best way to do this is with a video accelerator card. Orchid Technologies, Diamond Computer Systems, Video Logic, Alpha Systems all make accelerator cards. Another way is to use the Media Player. The Media Player is a standard Windows application that can be found as a Multimedia Accessories shortcut. Open an AVI file in the Media Player. Choose Properties form the Device menu and enable Full Screen playback. This will play video clips at full screen.

K. How do I create pauses in my videos so that I can display the original image before morphing it?

Use the Storyboard to create a clip in the location where the pause is to take place. Use the image you want to pause on as your start image, choose Transition for your filter type and press Edit. From the list on the left of the transition editor, choose Hold Constant and press OK. The image specified will be held constant for the number of frames in that clip.

L. What's the difference between the Frames Per Second Setting and the Frames setting in the Project Editor?

The Frames Setting, located under Effect, next to the Options Button in the Project Editor refers to the number of frames that the video will take. For example, a setting of 20 means that the clip will take 20 frames to occur. This setting can change from clip to clip using the storyboard. In fact, it can be even set to 0 if you need to temporarily disable a storyboard clip during a test rendering.

The video, Frames Per Second (FPS) setting specifies the speed at which one second of video will occur. TV runs at 30 FPS. CD-ROM playback is typically at 15 FPS. Settings over 30 are generally overkill and settings under 15 will look 'jerky'. This setting applies to the overall project and cannot be changed from clip to clip using the storyboard.

For Example, a frames setting of 20 with a FPS setting of 20 will result in a 1 second video clip upon rendering. A frames setting of 60 with a FPS setting of 30 will result in a 2 second video clip.

M. How do I "zoom out" on a Preview?

On many of the preview windows in PhotoMorph 2, you can zoom in on the preview on the area you wish to see an expanded view of. To zoom out, hold the shift key while clicking.

N. What is the purpose of those icons that appear as PhotoMorph 2 is loading?

PhotoMorph 2 is made of many modules that interrelate with each other. This is done so that we can add new modules efficiently to the program. As each module loads, an icon appears for it. This is only meant to give a graphical representation of the modules while they load. Each module then gets embedded into the application and the icon goes away. This is why you can't "click" on them, they get embedded into the functionality of PhotoMorph.

O. My Video for Windows is behaving funny in Windows 95, how do I reset it?

If you are experiencing odd video playback or creation issues in Windows 95, your Video for Windows may need to be reset. Go to the Control Panel, Add/Remove Programs, and tab to Windows Setup. Find Video Compression under Multimedia and uncheck it. Press Apply. Then, check it back on again.

Insert the Windows 95 CD or disk if prompted. This will correct some common Video for Windows problems.

P. How do I add sound to my finished videos?

There are a number of applications available that add sound to video files. All video editors (including Adobe Premiere, In sync: Razor, and Star Media's Video Action) can add sound easily to video files. SoundTrack, by Access Softek, can also be used to add sound to video clips. Video Action ED can be found on the Andover Advanced Technologies CD-ROM: Videology 3D and SoundTrack is included on Digital Video Kick Start. (See Update.wri for pricing and ordering information.)

Q. Can I use a sequence of frames as source material?

To use a sequence of frames as source material in PhotoMorph 2, use a video editor to convert the frame sequence to an AVI file. Be sure to carefully select your compression so that the quality of the source material is preserved. PhotoMorph 2 can output to sequential frames by choosing Frames in the Output section of Video Parameters in the Project Editor.

FLC, FLI, MOV files can also be used as source material once converted to the AVI file format.

R. Can PhotoMorph 2 convert AVI files to FLC files?

Yes, load the AVI file in the Start window of the Project Editor, set the Frames to be the number of frames in the AVI file, and choose Transition, Hold Constant as the Effect Type. Open the Video Parameters to specify the FLC output and the desired FPS setting and press Create Video. This technique can also be used to convert AVI files to a series of sequentially numbered frames. However, PhotoMorph 2 cannot be used to convert FLC files to AVI files.

S. Are there any shortcuts to morphing a sequence of images?

Yes, suppose you are morphing from image A to image B, and then would like to morph from image B back to image A. PhotoMorph 2 has a number of tools that make that process easier.

First, create your morph as you normally would between images A and B. Next, press the "Create New Clip" button in the Project Editor. This will take the end image of the first clip (image B) and make it the start image of the second clip. Set image A as the end image and press Edit. Notice that the points are lined up correctly! PhotoMorph 2 will mirror point placements for morphs and warps when the Create New Clip button is pressed.

Now, suppose you wanted to morph from image A to image B to image C. Set up your morph as above except add image C as the end image in the second clip. Press Edit. Note that the points are lined up correctly on the start

image (image B) but not on the end (image C). Find the active point (it should be red). Right Click on the location of the end image where that point should go. The active point 'snaps' into place! Now press the spacebar. The active point will change. Right click it into its proper place. Continue this process until all the points on the end image are lined up properly.

History of Release

A. 2.00
   Original Release

B. 2.01
   Corrected issues with: Installation and 256 color morphing.
   Added: Support for Drag and Drop

C. 2.02
   Corrected issues with: Video Editing, 256 color AVI's, and misc. issues
   Added: More Overlay features and more flexibility with multiple filters