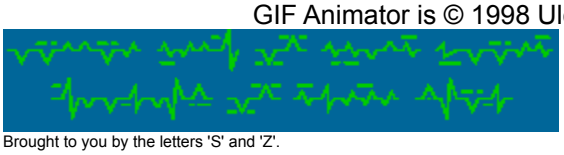
This screen only appears if you are missing the Contents file (agif.cnt). Please contact Ulead Systems to procure a replacement.



Brought to you by the letters 'S' and 'Z'.

About GIF

GIF is an acronym for **G**raphics **I**nterchange **F**ormat, an image file format created by CompuServe for conveniently storing and displaying image libraries online. Because of its near-photographic quality and relatively small file size, GIF has become one of the most widely used image file formats on the Internet today. GIF has undergone two major revisions since its inception in 1987, the most recent being the GIF89a specification.

GIF uses the Lempel-Ziv-Welch (LZW) compression method to store and reduce single or multiple images within the file by up to 40% of their original size. These images can contain up to 256 colors, and they do lose any of their original quality when undergoing compression, which can reduce an image by as much as 40% of its original size. Even though GIF is a "lossless" format, images that are imported from other file formats and converted to GIF may lose some of their quality in the transition from True Color to 256-color. GIF files also possess transparency attributes so that one color in the image is not displayed. This allows users to create clear backdrops for their images, letting a web-page's background colors show through. GIF also supports image interlacing, allowing users to watch the image "fade-in" as it downloads.

If multiple images are stored within a GIF file, they can be viewed sequentially much like a slide show or a small animated movie. The way they appear is defined by control extensions built into the file. With the appropriate tools, such as Ulead GIF Animator, you can set these controls yourself.

{button ,AL(`aboutgifpalette;animabasics;compactgif;howgifworks',0,``,`')} Related Topics

Animation Basics

Animation is created by displaying a series of overlapping images (cels) in rapid succession. Each cel's image differs only slightly from the ones preceding and following it. When enough of these cels are grouped together, the differences between them create the illusion of motion when played. In traditional animation, cels are drawn and painted by hand, although in recent years the animation industry has been moving away from traditional animation and towards computer-assisted animation. While the concepts used to create the animation are essentially the same, the methods used differ greatly.

The key defining element of all animation, and of movies in general, is the number of cels used to create the animation. The more cels a single animation contains, the smoother the motion of animated characters and objects appear to be. The less cels used, the more herky-jerky their movements will appear. In traditional animation, the number of cels becomes the length of the animation in seconds. In computer animation, however, the number of cels contributes to the ultimate size of the animation file.

When creating animation on the computer, a balance must be found between animation quality and file size, both of which are affected by the cel count of the animation. Defining the best trade-off point is never easy, but with careful planning and foresight, you can create captivating animations that don't require unreasonable amounts of disk space.

{button ,AL(`aboutgif;compactgif;howgifworks',0,`',`')} Related Topics

How GIF animation works

GIF animation takes advantage of the GIF format's built in capabilities to store and display more than one image file. Unlike conventional film where the speed of the animation is defined by the speed of the film, these images each have an associated set of controls that dictate how, when, and for how long the image is displayed on the screen. Also unlike conventional film, the images contained within an animated GIF need not be the same size. Each image layer, or cel, can be any size you want, and can be positioned where you want regardless of the locations of the other cels in your animation.

The animation produced by the GIF file is produced in exactly the same manner as the method used in film: motion is created by rapidly displaying a sequence of similar images. While the methods used to produce this effect in both film-making and GIF animation differ greatly, the end result is the same - still images are brought to life before your eyes.

{button ,AL(`aboutgif;animabasics;compactgif',0,`',`')} Related Topics

About GIF color palettes

Every GIF image file contains within it an index table that defines the number of colors that an image contains as well as exactly what colors each index represents. Every color in the 256-color ‘spectrum’ has its own unique identification which is stored in the image’s color index (the color palette). In GIF files, every color in the index requires 3 or 4 bytes of data to define it (depending on how it was originally stored). An image with a 256-color palette, then, could have a color index up to 1024 bytes long.

There are two kinds of palettes for animated GIFs: a Global Palette, which defines the colors every image in the animation uses as its default; and a Local Palette, which is unique to each image in the file. When an image is inserted into a GIF animation, you can select whether or not you want to use its Local Palette or the Global Palette. When building up the Global Palette, there are two ways to add colors to it from a newly inserted image: the Safe Palette, which matches an image’s original palette with colors found in a predefined ‘web-safe’ palette of 216 specific colors and then adds them to the Global Palette; and the Optimized Palette, which adds only the most predominant colors from an image’s color palette to the existing Global Palette.

{button ,AL(`builduppal;colorremap;usingglob;usingloc;usingpalette',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Using palettes

Once you have your collection of cels ready for insertion into your animation file, you should decide how you want to manage your color palettes. If every image contains virtually identical color palettes, then there is no reason to fatten your animation file with redundant information. When you insert the first image into your empty animation file, GIF Animator prompts you to choose how you want to build up your Global Palette. If you choose Original Palette, then the Global Palette will be based upon that image's original palette. After that, Color Remapping prompts you to add the palette each time you insert another image. This dialog box gives you the choice of whether or not to adapt the new image to the Global Palette, or to keep its own color palette. If the image contains the same colors as the original, then choose the Global Palette to save space. However, if it has colors not found in the Global Palette, you can add them to it by choosing Safe or Optimized palette or choose to retain the image's own color palette instead.

When selecting your Global Palette in the Build Up Global Palette dialog box, you can choose to use the Optimized Palette, retaining only the most commonly used colors from the image's original palette, or the Safe Palette, which adjusts your Global Palette to use the 216 web-browser specific colors used by Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer. Both of these variations limit the size of your color index, thus reducing your overall file size.

If the new image (or images) uses a different color scheme, you can do one of two things: retain the original palette by selecting that option in the Color Remapping dialog box, or elect to have GIF Animator adapt the new image's palette to the Global Palette by 'absorbing' a specified number of colors not found in the current Global Palette. This option can be set by selecting Auto Expand Global Palette in General Preferences.

It's not always recommended that you use the Global Palette - don't forsake the animation's quality just to reduce its overall file size. Reducing the animation's file size is not as important as maintaining the quality of your work, but it should be a serious consideration. The best time to use a Local Palette instead of a Global Palette is when the image being inserted is drastically different from the original image, or at least the cels preceding it. When that happens, and the Global Palette is used to display that image's colors, it usually doesn't look so good.

{button ,AL(`aboutgifpalette;builduppal;colorremap;usingglob;usingloc',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Creating compact GIF animation files

There are three ways you can significantly reduce the size of your animated GIF files: reducing the color palettes; reducing the number of cels (image layers); and optimizing the individual image layers. There are pros and cons to using the first two methods and they should be implemented judiciously. Keep in mind that the goal of creating animated GIF files is NOT to make them as compact as possible - creating compelling animations for the web is. However, until the time that data transmission speeds increase and everyone on the net has faster access, file size should still be a significant consideration when composing your animation.

The best way to reduce color palettes is to use the Global Palette as often as possible for displaying the colors of individual cels. If one or more cels have slightly different colors included in their palettes, have your General Preferences set to accumulate new colors. This way you needn't create a Local Palette for a cel that varies only by a few colors from the rest. If a cel has radically different colors from the others in the animation, your best bet is to give it a Local Palette and then reduce it by removing the colors it has in common with the Global Palette. Otherwise, the image may not display properly. The best reduced palettes are 16-. 32-, 64-, and 128-color palettes.

The second method to reduce the file size of your animation is to delete any unnecessary cels. In some cases, this may not be desirable due to the adverse affects it may have on the quality of your animation. But if you can get away with cutting out a few cels here and there, such as the ones that don't alter the animation quality significantly, then you should do it.

Ulead GIF Animator allows you to greatly reduce the file sizes of the individual cels through a third method: Optimization. When you select the File: Optimization Wizard command, GIF Animator analyzes the image layers in your animation, comparing them with one another, and then removes all the redundant pixels that each layer has in common. In some cases, this method can reduce your over all file size by as much as 200%.

Finally, you should consider cel sizes. If the motion of the animation occurs within a smaller field than the size of the "backdrop", or matte, then you shouldn't necessarily use cels that are the same size as your matte. With GIF animations, you can easily overlap much smaller GIFs to create small areas of animation set against a static backdrop. Doing it this way will reduce your file size considerably, but again, only if the quality of your animation doesn't suffer as a result.

{button ,AL(`cropimage;gifoptimize;mergeimage;usingpalette',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Building up the Global Palette

Building up the Global Palette helps you keep your animation file size down. When you insert your first image, a dialog box prompts you to choose a method for creating the Global Palette based upon the palette found in the first image inserted. The left pane shows you the original image and the right pane shows how that image will look once it's inserted into the animation using the Global Palette settings you select.

- The **Optimized Palette** calculates which colors from the image's Local Palette are most commonly used and builds up the Global Palette with these colors. The advantage to this is that you can remove unnecessary or redundant colors from the palette, thus reducing the file size, but the disadvantage to this is that the image will no longer be true to the original, varying minimally to significantly.
- The **Safe Palette** compares the image's original palette with the set of 216 colors designed specifically for use in the most common web browsers, and then tries to match the two. If the original palette has colors that aren't in that web browser set, it will try to find the nearest match. The final step then is to add the adjusted color palette from the original image to the Global Palette. What this does is guarantee that the colors imported from the image's palette to the new Global Palette will always appear as they should when viewed through a web browser, regardless of what display mode the person viewing the animation is using.
- The **Importance** menu lets you select a specific color channel which receives precedence when GIF Animator selects color to add to the Global and Local Palettes. For example, if your image consists mostly of greens, then you'll want to assign the Green channel Importance.
- The **Dither** option uses colors from the Global and Local palettes and creates unique combinations of them in subtle patterns within the image layer to compensate for missing colors. Generally, it's a good idea to select this option to keep your image as close as possible to the original.

Note: This dialog box does not appear if you have chosen **Select a predefined palette** in General Preferences.

{button ,AL(`aboutgifpalette;colorremap;usingglob;usingloc;usingpalette',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Color remapping

Color remapping allows you to choose how new image palettes are handled by GIF Animator. A dialog box appears for each image inserted after the first (if you have the 'Show preview dialog box' option selected in Image Layer Preferences) and allows you to choose which palette you want to use for the image. If all your images use the same set of colors, then you can select the Global Palette option, check 'Do not display this preview box again', and then click 'Insert'. The left pane shows you the original image and the right pane shows you how it will look when inserted according to the options you have selected.

- Choosing the **Global Palette** allows your image to use only the colors found in the Global Palette. If your image uses the same colors as the first inserted image, then this will remove the new image's palette and reduce the file size of your animation. However, if the new image's colors are noticeably different from the first inserted image's (and if the Global Palette was built up using that image's palette), then choosing this option is not recommended as it will make the new image display poorly.
- The **Local Palette** allows your image to use its original palette, and the image will appear the way it was intended. The disadvantage to this is the increase in the animation's file size.
- The **Safe Palette** has GIF Animator compare the image's palette to the 216-color 'web-safe' palette and match the image's original colors to it. Once the colors have been adjusted, they will be saved to the Global Palette as additions, but only if the 'Automatically expand global palette' option has been selected in the General Preferences. This guarantees that the added colors (and the new image) will always appear the same when viewed under different display settings. Unfortunately, most color-rich images don't adapt to the Safe Palette very well and appear distorted.
- The **Optimized Palette** makes GIF Animator extract only the most predominant colors from the new image and add them to the Global Palette. This will only take effect if the 'Automatically expand global palette' option has been selected in the General Preferences. The advantage to doing this is you remove the need for a Local Palette by adjusting the Global Palette to compensate for the new colors. The disadvantage is not all images can make the color shift without drastically changing their appearance.
- The **Importance** option lets you select which color channel receives emphasis when GIF Animator selects and discards color data from the image layer.
- The **Dither** option forces GIF Animator to intelligently blend existing colors in the image layer's new palette to simulate colors that no longer exist in it. This can be very effective in image layers where the colors fall mostly within the same color channel; if there is too large of a disparity between colors inside the image, then this may or may not be successful.

{button ,AL(`aboutgifpalette;builduppal;usingglob;usingloc;usingpalette',0,`',`')} Related Topics

General preferences

- **Default Global Palette** – defines how the Global Palette is built when creating a new GIF animation. The different settings are:
  - **Use the palette of the first layer image** – uses the native palette of the first image layer imported into GIF Animator. In the entry box, enter the maximum number of colors from the first image layer that you want to retain.
  - **Select pre-defined palette** – uses one of the pre-defined palettes built into GIF Animator. The 'Netscape' palettes contain the 216 'web-safe' colors supported by Netscape web browsers.
  - **Use a custom palette file** – allows you to use a pre-existing palette file for the default Global Palette. Palette files use the *.pal extension.
- **Automatically expand global palette** – allows the Global Palette to add colors not native to it as images are imported. Enter the maximum number of colors to add to the Global Palette in the entry box. If the Global Palette contains 256 colors, then no new colors are added.
- **Discard image title** – check this option to remove the image title from the Layer Pane in order to further reduce the animation's file size. If left unchecked, then the image's original file name is used as the image layer's title.
- **Enable Startup Wizard** – check this to display the Startup Wizard each time GIF Animator opens.

{button ,AL(`attributes;preferences',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Image layer preferences

- **Default properties for newly inserted images** – these options establish the default properties for each image layer as it's imported into GIF Animator.
  - **Interlaced** – check this option to set interlacing on the image layer. Interlacing allows the image to gradually 'fade-in' as it downloads. However, most web browsers today don`t support this option, although dedicated GIF viewers should.
  - **Play interlace when previewed** – displays the interlacing for each image layer when it's played during a preview.
- **Delay time** – defines how long the image layer is displayed during animation. This is the default delay time applied to imported images; to change it, select the image layer and then change the Delay Time setting on the Attribute toolbar.
  - **Specify by frame rate** – defines the delay time for each image layer based on 'frame rate' (the number of frames played per second).
  - **How to remove** – defines how each image layer is removed from the screen during animation. For more on the removal methods available in GIF animations, click  .
- **Palette conversion** – sets the method by which GIF Animator adapts varying color palettes to the 8-bit data type (256 color). **Dither** is how GIF Animator compensates for colors not found in the either Global Palette or the image's converted Local Palette. It simulates missing colors by mixing combinations of existing colors in the area the original color occupied. Palette allows you to set the type of palette used for each image layer. **Importance** lets you specify which color channel receives the emphasis when saving and discarding colors (colors in the selected channel are given preference over colors in the other two channels, for example). For more on palettes, click  .
- **Show preview image dialog box** – check this option to display the Preview Image dialog box each time you import a new image layer into GIF Animator. The Preview Image dialog box allows you to select which color remapping method to be used to adapt the image layer's colors to the 8-bit data type.

{button ,AL(`attributes;preferences',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Personal comment preferences

- **Add personal comment block** – automatically appends a personalized comment block to the end of every GIF animation you save. This is especially useful for copyright notices and version histories.
- **Content** - enter the text of your personal comment block here, up to a maximum of 512 characters.

{button ,AL(`attributes;preferences',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Exporting image layers

You can export image layers in two different ways - as a new animated GIF file or as a sequence of separate GIF files. Click the File: Export - Image Layers menu command to open the Export Image Layers dialog box.

To export a group of images as a new animation:

1. Select the images you want using your while holding down the CTRL key (to select individual image files) or the SHIFT key (to select a range of image files).
2. Select **As a single file** under **Export multiple images**.
3. Click OK.
4. Name your new file and click Save.

To export a group of images as a sequence of files:

1. Select the images you want using your mouse while holding down the CTRL key (to select individual image files) or the SHIFT key (to select a range of image files).
2. Select **As a sequence of files** under **Export multiple images**.
3. Click OK.
4. Choose a name to be shared by the files and click Save.

Images exported as part of sequence will all have the same name but be numbered according their order in the original GIF animation. For example, if you were to choose ‘Sunset’ as the shared name, then the new files would be named ‘sunset.gif’, ‘sunset001.gif’, sunset002.gif, and so on.

{button ,AL(`aboutgif;duplimage;mergeimage',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Changing attributes globally

There are two methods by which you can change the attributes of all your image layers at once (or even just the selected layers); The first method is to use the Global Attribute Change dialog box and while the second method is based on creating a selection in the Layer pane. Both methods are outlined below.

To change an attribute globally using the Global Attribute Change feature:

1. Click the **Global Attribute Change** button on the Attribute toolbar or select the Edit: Global Attribute Change command to open up the dialog box.
2. Select the image layer you want to use a template for the others.
3. Select the attributes you want to copy from the selected image layer to the others.
4. Choose whether you want to apply the change to all images in the animation or only to the ones you've checked.
5. Click OK.

The second method is more convenient, and it generally offers the same amount of control as the Global Attribute Change feature.

To change an attribute globally using the selection method:

1. Select the image layers you want to modify by clicking on them in the Layer Pane while pressing the Ctrl or Shift keys.
2. Make changes to options on the Attributes toolbar.

Note: When creating a Local Palette for every image layer, the colors for the new Local Palettes will be based upon the current Global Palette. If you want to use the same Local Palette as another layer and not the colors from the Global Palette, then save the palette as a file and then load it into the other image layer from the Local Palette dialog box.

{button ,AL(`attributes;preferences',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Global information attributes

The Global Information Attributes allow you to set the properties for the entire animation.

- **Logical Screen** - These settings affect the appearance of the workspace. The only time the Logical Screen settings apply to the animation is when the animation is played in a dedicated GIF viewer. For the purposes of the web, these settings only apply to the appearance of the workspace. Try to make the logical screen the same size as the animation's largest image so that confusion doesn't arise when you start arranging image layers. This can be done by selecting the 'Automatic' checkbox.
- **Global Palette** - This panel gives you access to the Global Palette dialog box as well as showing you how many color cells your current Global Palette is using. In the Global Palette dialog box you can add, remove, or adjust colors.
- **Background Color** - Allows you to set the background color of the workspace. This color won't be visible on your web pages unless you are playing the animation in a dedicated GIF viewer. This is useful for finding the "holes" in your animation, places where the web-page's background will show through when played on the web.
- **Looping** - This sets how many times the animation will play once it's finished downloading. If the 'Infinite' option is not selected, then the default setting will be to loop only once (0).

{button ,AL(`attributes;preferences',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Image Layer attributes

The Image Layer Attributes allow you to define the characteristics for each individual image layer. To do so, simply select the image layer and the Attribute toolbar will show that layer's current settings. These settings can be adjusted from this toolbar.

- **Image Title** - The name of the current image layer. If you don't want GIF Animator to retain the image's original file name when it's imported into the animation, select the 'Discard image title' option in General Preferences.
- **How to remove** - Defines how the image layer is removed once it has been displayed during playback. For more details about the different settings, click  .
- **Global Attribute Change** - Allows you to adjust the settings for all image layers using the currently active image layer as a template.
- **X & Y-Offset** - How far from the upper-left hand corner of the workspace the image is. This is set in number of pixels and you can input the numbers manually to give you finer control over how the image is positioned.
- **Local Palette** - If your image doesn't already have a Local Palette, select this box to create one based upon the Global Palette. You can alter, adjust, add, or delete colors from the Local Palette by clicking the Edit button.
- **Interlace & Transparent Index** - These two settings allow you to set the transparent color of the image (using the color's palette index number or the color picker) as well as whether or not the image layer is interlaced. **Note:** The interlacing of image layers during playback is not currently supported by web browsers and will only work in a dedicated GIF89a viewer, such as GIF Animator.
- **Wait For User Input** - Some dedicated GIF viewers (and very few browsers) support this command. It causes the selected image layer to pause while playing and wait for the user to either press a key or click a mouse button before continuing. This is useful for creating 'interactive' animations.
- **Delay** - Sets the length of time, in hundredths of a second, that the image layer is displayed during playback. The default setting can be defined in Image Layer Preferences.

{button ,AL(`attributes;preferences',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Comment Layer attributes

You can define the Comment Layer's title as well as contents from this Attribute toolbar. The maximum number of characters allowable in the comment block is 512, including empty spaces. Try to include copyright and authorship information with the image layers where it is appropriate.

{button ,AL(`attributes;preferences',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Workspace

The workspace allows you to view and reposition images within the composite animation. If an image layer has been checked in the Layer Pane, then it will show through all the layers regardless of which layer you are currently working in, unless another image lies directly over it. **Note:** this only applies to the workspace and has no effect on how the animation file plays.

- **To add new images** to the animation, you can drag new images in from any Windows folder or the desktop, and drop them into the workspace or the Layer Pane; or you can open the Add images dialog box from the Layer menu or the Standard toolbar, and browse for the image you want.
- **To reposition an image** in the frame, simply grab it with the mouse and drag it to the desired position. You can define the position more precisely by adjusting the X-offset and Y-offset settings on the Attribute toolbar for that image layer.
- **To adjust the properties** of the composite animation, click Global Information in the Layer Pane and adjust the settings on the Attribute toolbar.

{button ,AL(`attributes;general;preferences',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Layer Pane

The Layer Pane is the area where you view and arrange the different layers of the animated GIF. This pane is resizable and is located to the left of the large workspace in the center of the application window.

- **To Make a layer always visible** in the workspace, check the box next to its name. Note that this option is only for editing purposes and has no bearing on how the animation plays.
- **To Display the attributes** for a given layer, click the desired layer in the Layer Pane and the Attribute Toolbar will change accordingly.
- **To Adjust a layer's settings**, select it and make the desired changes in the Attribute toolbar.
- **To Move a layer** up or down, use your mouse to drag and drop the selected layer into the desired position. You can also use the arrows located on the Standard toolbar or the shortcut keys to do the same thing.

Using the View: Layer Pane menu command, you can change how image layers are displayed in the Layer Pane. To see descriptions of the different display modes, click  .

{button ,AL(`attributes;general;preferences',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Using the Global Palette

The Global Palette defines a common group of colors any image layer within the animation can use if it's not using a Local Palette.

To edit pre-existing colors:

1. Select Edit: Global Palette or click the Global Palette **Edit** button on the Global Information Attribute toolbar to open the Global Palette dialog box.
2. Choose the color you want to edit by selecting it using the mouse. Using the CTRL key allows you to select more than one color a click at a time while using the SHIFT key allows you to select an entire row. If you select multiple color cells you can only delete them or make a color gradient.
3. Change the color in the selected cell by clicking on the color window beneath the **Gradient** button to open the Color Picker dialog box, or by adjusting the RGB color values manually.
4. Click OK.

To create a gradient between two colors:

1. Select Edit: Global Palette or click the Global Palette **Edit** button on the Global Information Attribute toolbar to open the Global Palette dialog box.
2. Select three or more colors. Choosing two colors will result in nothing happening because they are only the start and end colors. The more colors you select, the more noticeable the gradient.
3. Click the **Gradient** button. A small dialog box opens where you can confirm your start and end colors. If you want to change these, click the color cells displayed to open the Color Picker.
4. Click OK. The gradient colors will replace the previously selected colors.

Note: Any cells with an X in them are currently not being used by the image layer.

{button ,AL(`aboutgifpalette;usingloc;usingpalette',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Using the Local Palette

Every image layer that is inserted into an animation file can contain its own palette of colors, called the Local Palette. This palette defines the colors used in that single image alone and it does not affect in any way the other image layers.

To edit pre-existing colors:

1. Select Edit: Local Palette or click the Local Palette **Edit** button on the Image Layer Attribute toolbar to open the Local Palette dialog box.
2. Choose the color you want to edit by selecting it using the mouse. Using the CTRL key allows you to select more than one color a click at a time while using the SHIFT key allows you to select an entire row. If you select multiple color cells you can only delete them or make a color gradient.
3. Change the color in the selected cell by clicking on the color window beneath the **Gradient** button to open the Color Picker dialog box, or by adjusting the RGB color values manually.
4. Click OK.

To create a gradient of colors:

1. Select Edit: Local Palette or click the Local Palette **Edit** button on the Image Layer Attribute toolbar to open the Local Palette dialog box.
2. Select three or more colors. Choosing two color will result in nothing happening because they are only the start and end colors. The more colors you select, the more noticeable the gradient.
3. Click the **Gradient** button. A small dialog box opens where you can confirm your start and end colors. If you want to change these, click the color cells displayed to open the Color Picker.
4. Click OK. The gradient colors will replace the previously selected colors.

Note: Any cells with an X in them are currently not being used by the image layer.

{button ,AL(`aboutgifpalette;usingglob;usingpalette',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Adding color animation

You can animate an image layer's colors by selecting a range of colors from 2 to 32. For each color animated, one new frame will be created. This works best on images with fewer colors, and in a 256-color photograph the effects of color animation won't be quite so noticeable.

To add color animation:

1. Select Layer: Add Color Animation to open the Add Color Animation dialog box.
2. Select the range of colors you want to animate using the CTRL-key (to select more than one color cell a click at a time) or the SHIFT-key (select a range). You can also select the colors directly from the image in the preview pane to the right of the palette using your mouse pointer.
3. Arrange the selected colors in the order you want by dragging and dropping the color tabs in the Animation Order layout control. To remove a color from the sequence, drag it out of the Animation Order layout control.
4. Choose **Reverse animation order** if you want the color shift to go in reverse order.
5. Click OK.

Note: If you want to create a smooth blending transition between the colors, create a gradient of colors in your Local or Global Palette, and then select the gradient range for color animation when you open the Add Color Animation dialog box.

{button ,AL(`addbanner;addcolorani;addtransiteff;cubeffect;effects;multirep',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Adding a simple transition

Transition effects allow you to create fade-ins from one image to another by inserting new frames into the animation to simulate the effect.

To add a simple transition effect:

1. Select Layer: Add Simple Transition to open the Add Simple Transition dialog box.
2. Choose your start image. This can be the currently active image layer or an empty background frame. To have an image fade in from "nothing", select **Matte** from the Start Image drop-down box. To have it fade in from the active layer, choose the image's layer title from the Start Image drop-down box. If you use the Matte option, you can set its size attributes under **Matte dimensions**.
3. Choose your end image. This can be the image layer that follows the currently active image layer or a background frame. If you choose **Matte** from the Destination Image drop-down box, this creates the effect of the active image layer fading to "black". You can set the Matte size attributes under **Matte dimensions**.
4. Select the transition quality under **Quality (Frames)**. In GIF Animator, the quality of a transition effect is measured in the number of frames used to create it. The **Normal** setting is best for an even balance between number of frames and quality.
5. Choose the transition effect's duration under **Transition length**. **Note:** A shorter duration means the less frames used to achieve the transition effect, and this will reduce the quality of the transition. On the other hand, the longer the duration means the more frames used, which will create a smoother transition but increase your overall file size considerably.
6. Choose the type of transition you want from the drop-down box next to the sample transition window.
7. Click OK.

{button ,AL(`addbanner;addcolorani;addtransiteff;scrolling',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Adding banner text

The Add Banner Text dialog box allows you to create scrolling text banners anywhere within your animation. These banners are additional frames that can be positioned however you like in relation to the rest of the animation. Keep in mind that these frames will increase the overall size of your animation file. To open this dialog box, select the Layer: Add Banner Text command.

To add banner text to your animation:

1. Select the Layer: Add Banner Text command to open the Add Banner Text dialog box.
2. Enter the contents of your banner text in the **Text Style** tab, in the Banner Text input box.
3. Format your text using the text formatting controls located beneath the preview window and in the **Text Style** tab.
4. Switch to the **Rolling Control** tab and set how you want the banner text to move across the animation screen.
5. Switch to the **Border Style** tab and set the banner text border.
6. Click OK.

The **Merge With Background** Image option on the **Text Style** tab page lets you create banner text that blends in with your animation. Optimizing the banner text shortens the width of the banner, which goes along way toward conserving file size but limits you later if you want to edit the image layer. Both of these features will work in any web browser.

Note: If you create banner text with a color background and then manually set that color to transparent, the banner text frames won't display properly unless you also set the removal option for each text layer as **To previous state**, a method not supported by all web browsers.

{button ,AL(`addbanner;addcolorani;addtransiteff;scrolling',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Merging images

The Merge dialog box allows you to combine two or more images into a single cel. This feature is useful for creating an effect where one image floats above an ever shifting background or for reducing the number of cels your animation uses. When merging images, the Merge dialog box stays open until you click Exit, allowing you to perform the merge operation on multiple layers.

To merge a group of images:

1. Choose the Layer: Merge Images command to open the Merge dialog box.
2. Select the image layers you want to merge using your mouse while holding down the CTRL key (to select each image a click at a time) or the SHIFT key (to select an entire range).
3. Click Merge.

If you want to replace the original images with the merged one, select the **Replace original image layers** checkbox.

Note: To have one layer ‘floating’ above another, the floating layer should come after the backdrop layer in the Layer Pane.

{button ,AL(`duplimage;exportimage',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Cropping images

The Crop dialog box allows you to cut away redundant portions of an image and keep only the region you want. You can use this dialog box to crop individual frames or an entire range of frames. If you want to crop a range, you can choose between cropping every frame in the animation or just the one that are checked.

To crop an image:

1. Select the image layer in the Layer Pane that you want to crop.
2. Choose Edit: Crop to open the Crop dialog box.
3. Use your mouse to drag the bounding box to the region of the image you want to keep.
4. Resize the bounding box by dragging the control points with your mouse pointer.
5. Click OK.

If you crop an image and don't want to keep the original within the animation, select the **Replace original image layer** checkbox.

Tip: Try using the Crop command when you have multiple images that are all essentially the same except that the variation between them is contained to a small region. By cropping all the cels except the first one (matte), you can achieve the same animation effect and keep your animation file size down.

{button ,AL(`duplimage;exportimage;mergeimage',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Duplicating images

The Duplicate dialog box allows you to create duplicates of an image layer, or a group of image layers.

To duplicate an image layer:

1. Select the image layer in the Layer Pane that you want to copy.
2. Choose Edit: Duplicate to open the Duplicate dialog box.
3. Select how many copies of the image you want to create.
4. Enter a value for **Horizontal Shifting** if you want the new copies to be pasted to the left or to the right of the original image. This image will appear to move along the X-axis during playback. A negative value indicates a leftward movement, while a positive value indicates a rightward movement.
5. Enter a value for **Vertical Shifting** if you want the new copies to be pasted higher or lower than the original image. This image will appear to move along the Y-axis during playback. A negative value indicates an upward movement while a positive value indicates a downward movement.
6. Click Ok.

To duplicate multiple image layers:

1. Select the image layers in the Layer Pane that you want to copy by checking their boxes.
2. Choose Edit: Duplicate to open the Duplicate dialog box.
3. Select **All checked images** under **Range to duplicate**.
4. Select how many copies of the images you want to create.
5. Enter a value for **Horizontal Shifting** if you want the new copies to be pasted to the left or to the right of the original images. These images will appear to move along the X-axis during playback. A negative value indicates a leftward movement, while a positive value indicates a rightward movement.
6. Enter a value for **Vertical Shifting** if you want the new copies to be pasted higher or lower than the original images. These images will appear to move along the Y-axis during playback. A negative value indicates an upward movement while a positive value indicates a downward movement.
7. Click Ok.

{button ,AL(`cropimage;exportimage;mergeimage',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Status Bar

The Status Bar shows you information about menu commands, pixel coordinates, and color indices and values of areas under the mouse pointer.

Width

The Logical Screen Width sets the horizontal size of the workspace. Image Layer Width is a measure of the horizontal size of the actual image, measured in pixels.

Height

The Logical Screen Height sets the vertical size of the workspace. Image Layer Height is a measure of the vertical size of the actual image, measured in pixels.

Automatic

Automatically resizes the virtual workspace to match the largest image contained within the current animation.

Total Colors

Tells you the current number of colors the palette contains. Each color is indexed and occupies one cell out a potential maximum of 256.

Edit

Opens the palette for editing. You can add, delete, or adjust colors from within the selected palette.

Background Color

Sets the background color of the workspace your animation occupies. This in no way affects the actual animation as it is viewed on the web, but is useful during animation composition for finding the “holes” in your composite animation. If you are using a number of smaller GIFs with no common background, then choosing a background color that’s not in the image layer’s palettes will show you the empty spaces between images. These empty spaces are transparent when the animation is played in a web browser.

Looping

Sets the number of times the animation repeats when being played. If a number is not chosen then the animation will loop only once as a default. This can be found on the Attribute toolbar when the Global Palette layer is selected.

Picking the background color

The Pick Background Color dialog box allows you to choose the color of your workspace. All image layers will be superimposed over this background color.

To select a background color:

1. Click the **Background Color** button on the Global Information Attribute toolbar.
2. Select a color cell by clicking on it.
3. The dialog box closes automatically and changes the color of your workspace.

Title

Each layer within an animation has its own title to distinguish it from the others as well as make managing the layers easier. A layer's title can be changed from the Attribute toolbar, the only exception being the Global Information layer. The overall file size of the animation can be reduced by choosing to drop the image layers' title information when the animation is saved. This is done in General Preferences by checking the 'Discard image tite' option.

X- & Y-Offset

The distance of an image from the upper-left corner of the workspace. This distance is measured in pixels along the X- and Y-axes.

Interlace

Check this option to load the image gradually, giving the appearance of a fade-in. As of yet, web browsers don't fully support animated GIF interlacing during playback, and as such this only works for the first image in the sequence when the animation file is downloaded.

Play interlace

Shows the effects of image interlacing during a Preview. This creates the appearance that the image is fading in.
Note: Interlacing during animation playback is not currently supported by web browsers.

Transparent Index

Defines a single color within the image layer (or in the entire animation, if set in the Global Information layer) to be transparent when displayed in a web browser. The index number is the position the transparent color occupies in the palette.

Delay

Sets the length of time, in hundredth of a second increments, that an image layer is displayed during animation.

How To Remove

Defines how an image is removed during the animation sequence. The options are:

- **Web browser decide** - The web browser playing the animation removes the image. How this is done varies from browser to browser and is not recommended.
- **Do not remove** - The image is not removed and any subsequent images are displayed over it.
- **To background color** - Removes the image and replaces it with the web page background color. If image layers overlap evenly, then a smooth transition effect occurs.
- **To previous state** - Removes the image and replaces it with the image preceding it. If all the images in the sequence are set to this, then a smooth transition from one image to the next happens regardless of how they are overlapped.

Note: The **To previous state** option is not currently supported by all web browsers.

New

- **Document** – Creates a new animation file.
- **Another copy** – Opens the existing animation in a new window.
- **New window** – Opens a new, empty instance of GIF Animator.

Open GIF

Opens a GIF or GIF animation file.

Save & Save As

Saves the animation currently open in GIF Animator.

Restore

Restores a modified animation back to the last saved version.

History List

A list of the most recently saved files. You can open any file in the history list by selecting it.

Exit

Closes GIF Animator, prompting you to save any changes to the current animation if you have not done so already.

Cut

Removes the active layer and places it in the clipboard.

Copy

Makes a duplicate of the active layer and places it in the Clipboard.

Paste

Pastes data from the clipboard to the active file. In GIF Animator, you may only paste either images or comment blocks.

Delete

Permanently removes the selection from the active animation.

Previous Image

Shifts you to the previous image layer. This can be done rapidly using the keyboard quick keys.

[Shift + A]

Next Image

Shifts you to the next image layer. This can be done rapidly using the keyboard quick keys.

[Shift + Z]

Actual View

Resizes the image layer to 1x magnification.

Zoom-In/Out

Submenus for zooming in or out on the current image layer. The submenus offer magnifications ranging from 1/8x to 8x.

Start/Stop Preview

Plays or stops a preview of the current composition.

Full Screen Preview

Clears the screen and plays the preview of the animation at regular size. Press ESC to return to the GIF Animator application window.

Add Images

Opens the Add Image dialog box allowing you to browse for the desired images and add the selected image(s) into the Layer Pane.

Add Comments

Creates a new comment layer in the Layer Pane. The contents of the comment layer can be entered on the Attribute toolbar.

Move Layer Up

Moves the active layer up one.

Move Layer Down

Moves the active layer down one.

Help

Starts the on-line help.

You can also access help topics by:

- Clicking the help button on the Standard toolbar and then clicking on the item of interest
- Pressing the F1 key when a menu command is under your mouse pointer.

About

Shows copyright and other information about this version of Ulead GIF Animator.

Crop

Opens the Crop dialog box, allowing you to resize an image layer by cutting away unncessary portions.

Duplicate

Opens the duplicate dialog box, allowing you to copy more than one image layer at a time.

Global Attribute Change

Opens the Global Attribute Change dialog box, allowing you to change one or more image layer attributes across a range of image layers.

Standard toolbar

The Standard toolbar contains shortcut buttons to the most common menu commands used in GIF Animator.

Attribute toolbar

The Attribute toolbar contains the controls for every layer in the GIF animation. To change the properties for a given layer, select it. The Attribute toolbar will adjust to display that layer's properties.

Add Banner Text

Opens the Add Banner Text dialog box, allowing you to create animated text banners to be placed within your animation.

Add Simple Transition

Opens the Add Simple Transition dialog box, allowing you to create basic transitions between frames.

Add Color Animation

Opens the Add Color Animation dialog box, allowing you to animate selected colors within an image layer.

Export Image Layers

Opens the Export Image Layers dialog box, allowing you to create new GIF files based on the images contained within the current animation.

Merge Images

Opens the Merge Image dialog box, allowing you to merge two or more image layers into a single layer.

Adding image layers

You can add images by:

- Dragging an image file from any Windows Explorer window, folder, or from PhotoImpact Explorer and dropping it into either the Layer Pane or the workspace.
- Choosing the Layer: Add Images command to open the Add Images dialog box and browse for the desired image.
- Clicking the Add images button on the Standard toolbar to open the Add Images dialog box and browse for the desired image.

{button ,AL(`addbanner;addcolorani;addingcomm;addtransiteff',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Adding comment layers

You can add a new comment layer anywhere in the animation sequence by:

- Choosing the Layer: Add Comment command.
- Clicking the Add Comment button on the Standard toolbar.

Enter the text and title of the comment layer in the Attribute toolbar.

{button ,AL(`addbanner;addcolorani;addingimage;addtransiteff',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Adding colors to a palette

To add new colors to the Global Palette:

1 Select the Global Information layer in the Layer Pane.

2 Click the **Edit** button on the Attribute toolbar. This opens the Global Palette dialog box.

3 Click the **Add** button in the Global Palette dialog box. Type in the number of new cells you want to create.

or

Select a preexisting color cell.

4 Use the **Red**, **Green**, and **Blue** color controls to create the color you want.

5 Click OK.

To add new colors to a Local Palette:

1 Select the desired image layer in the Layer Pane.

2 Click the **Edit** button on the Attribute toolbar. This opens the Local Palette dialog box.

3 Click the **Add** button in the Local Palette dialog box. Type in the number of new cells you want to create.

or

Select a preexisting color cell.

4 Use the **Red**, **Green**, and **Blue** color controls to create the color you want.

5 Click OK.

Note: Any cells with an X in them are currently not being used by the image layer.

{button ,AL(`builduppal;colorremap;removcolor;usingpalette',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Removing colors from a palette

To remove colors from the Global Palette:

1 Select the Global Information layer in the Layer Pane.

2 Go to the Attribute toolbar and click the **Edit** button. This opens the Global Palette dialog box.

3 Click the color cell in the Global Palette that you want to remove. To remove multiple cells: use CTRL to select groups of colors one cell at a time or SHIFT to select whole rows of colors.

4 Click the **Delete** button.

5 Click OK.

To remove colors from a Local Palette:

1 Select the desired image layer in the Layer Pane.

2 Go to the Attribute Toolbar and click the **Edit** button. This opens the Local Palette dialog box.

3 Click the color cell in the Local Palette that you want to remove. To remove multiple cells: use CTRL to select groups of colors one cell at a time or SHIFT to select whole rows of colors.

4 Click the **Delete** button.

5 Click OK.

Note: Any cells with an X in them are currently not being used by the image layer.

{button ,AL(`addingcolor;compactgif;usingpalette',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Removing image layers

To remove an image layer:

1. Click an image layer you want to remove in the Layer Pane.
2. Press the **Delete** key on your keyboard or select the Edit: Delete command.

{button ,AL(`addingimage;cropimage;mergeimage;removcommlay',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Removing comment layers

To remove a comment layer:

1. Click the comment layer you want to remove in the Layer Pane.
2. Press the **Delete** key on your keyboard or select the Edit: Delete command.

{button ,AL(`addingcomm;removimalayer',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Positioning image layers

In GIF Animator, there are many ways to position image layers within the animation. The easiest and most direct way is to use your mouse and drag the image into position in the workspace. Other methods are:

- Using the X- and Y-Offset attributes of the image layer to position the image more exactly within the workspace.
- Using the arrow keys on your keyboard to reposition the image. The Up/Down arrows move the image along the X axis while the Right/Left arrows move it along the Y-Axis.

{button ,AL(`addingimage;cropimage;duplimage;mergeimage;removimalayer',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Using the Windows Clipboard with GIF Animator

Using the Windows Clipboard, it is easy to bring in images with file formats not supported by GIF Animator and insert them into your animation as new image layers.

1. Open the file in an imaging application that supports that file format.
2. Copy the selection to the Clipboard using the Edit: Copy command or the **Copy** button on the toolbar.
3. Open GIF Animator.
4. Choose the Edit: Paste Image command or click the **Paste** button on the Standard toolbar.

You can also copy images already existing within the animation and paste them back as a new layer separate from the original.

{button ,AL(`addingcomm;addingimage;removcommlay;removimalayer',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Preferences

Opens the Preferences dialog box, allowing you to define the general settings for GIF Animator.

Importing other image file formats

GIF Animator natively supports the following file formats: GIF, JPEG, PCX, PSD, PCT, TIF, PNG, TGA, EPS, IFF, IMG, MAC, MSP, PCD and BMP. However, if you have the full version of Ulead PhotoImpact installed on your machine, then GIF Animator will update itself automatically to use the file format support extensions (FIO) included with PhotoImpact, which natively supports more than 30 different file format types. If you don't have Ulead PhotoImpact, then you can download free FIOs to add to the GIF Animator FIO folder (located in the GIF Animator directory). This File Filter Pack can be found at the Ulead Web Utilities homepage, under Free Stuff:

http://www.webutilities.com/

{button ,AL(`aboutgif;useclipboard',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Getting Started

When you first open Ulead GIF Animator, you'll notice immediately that there are three major components to the program window: the toolbars, the central "work" area, and the "layer" pane to the left of it. Beneath the standard windows toolbar is the Attributes toolbar - it contains information and settings for each layer in your GIF Animation. Each image layer (or "frame") in the animation is listed in the Layer pane to the left of the big work area that occupies the majority of the program window. When you click a layer, the image it contains is displayed to the right while its attributes and settings are displayed up above in the Attributes toolbar. Any of these attributes can be redefined or reconfigured, giving you a lot of flexibility in how the image in that layer is displayed. When GIF Animator brings in images from outside the program, if the images don't already contain settings for some of the attributes listed, then default attributes are assigned to them. You can change the default settings GIF Animator uses in the Preferences dialog box, which can be opened with the File: Preferences command.

Tip: If you right mouse click over any image layer in the Layer Pane a pop-up menu will appear listing all the commands that can be used to manipulate or edit that image. These commands come from the Edit and Layer menus.

{button ,AL(`aboutgif;aboutgifpalette;addingimage;animabasics;aniwiz;compactgif;effects;exportimage;gifoptimize;howgifworks;importfileform;optiwiz;preferences;removimalayer;startwiz',0,`',`')} Related Topics

GIF Optimization

One of the more powerful features in Ulead GIF Animator is its built in ability to super-compress animation files using custom techniques that result in picture perfect images with the fastest possible download times. When you create images for the web, not only do you need to worry about how the images look, you must also be concerned with the size of your image files. People don't want to spend the bulk of their time on the Web waiting for your cool pictures to download - patience on the Internet can be measured in milliseconds, so if your graphics aren't optimized for speed then you're going to lose out.

Ulead GIF Animator gives you the ultimate solution to fat file sizes: the Optimization Wizard. This wizard takes you through the process of paring the fat away from your animated GIF files and gives you control over how the technique is performed. It also gives you complete control over the color palettes, allowing you to merge similar colors that, to the human eye, contain no discernible differences but actually contribute to bulky file sizes.

There are three steps in GIF Optimization:

1. **Removing Color Redundancy** - removing colors from that palette that are not used in the image, appear more than once, or are similar to colors that are used more frequently.
2. **Remapping the Global Palette** - if colors from one or more local palettes can be placed into the Global Palette then you eliminate the need for Local Palettes, thereby reducing your overall file size. In some cases, where the Global Palette has reached its limit, optimized Local Palettes can be used to handle color unique to a particular image: while this Local Palette does increase the animation file size, it doesn't increase it as much as a full sized palette would.
3. **Removing Image Redundancy** - multiple image layers may share the same static image elements or pixels. Because these elements or pixels don't change from frame to frame, they are unnecessary for the animation. GIF Animator removes these static redundancies from each image layer in the animation, and minimizes the file size.

Optimization Wizard

Opens the Optimization Wizard which analyzes the image layers of your animation and removes all the redundant pixels, thereby reducing your file size considerably.

Rotate & Flip

Allows you to rotate the active image layer (Left 90º, Right 90º, or Rotate 180º) and / or flip it (Horizontally or Vertically).

Adding a cube effect

The Add Cube Effect dialog box allows you to take two images and create a “rotating cube” illusion out them. With it you can create new kind of banner where one image rotates out of the picture and is replaced by another image rotating into it. The images appear as if they are faces on a cube or a block.

To create a cube effect:

1. Select the image layer you want to start the sequence with.
2. Choose the Layer: Add Cube Effect command to open the Add Cube Effect dialog box.
3. Select the direction you want the images to rotate in from the Direction drop down menu.
4. Select the number of **Frames** you want the rotation to occur over, as well as the Duration each image is displayed.
5. Adjust the **Perspective** and **Contrast** settings until you get the desired effect. The **Preview** window will automatically update itself as you adjust the settings.
6. Click OK.

If you want the image to fade from a matte background into the image, select **Matte from the Source Image** menu. If you want the image to fade into a matte background, select **Matte from the Destination image** menu.

{button ,AL(`addbanner;addcolorani;addtransiteff;scrolling',0,`',`')} Related Topics

What's new?

Version 3.0
Version 2.0
Version 1.5
Version 1.2

Optimization Wizard - a revolutionary way of compacting your animated GIF files even more without a loss in quality. This is a great tool to streamline gifs for the fastest possible download times.

Add Video - create GIF Animations from the frames of imported AVI files. Additional free video filters for importing QuickTime and FLI/FLC clips will be made available at our web site in the near future.

Add Cube Effect - a new special effect. Create dynamic rotating banner images with this cool new effect creation command.

Rotate & Flip your images with this enhanced Edit menu command. Using this new command together with Duplicate or Copy/Paste commands allows you to easily create simple motion with just a single image.

Improved **Banner Text** - now you can create optimized banner text without any browser limitations.

Improved **Merge** dialog box - merge as many layers as you want from within the same dialog box.

Expanded **File Format Support** - drag and drop files from 8 different format types directly into GIF Animator.

Quickstart Tutorial - get up and running in less time than it takes to install GIF Animator with this fast and easy introduction to the world of GIF animation.

Add Cube Effect

Opens the Add Cube Effect dialog box, which allows you to select two images and create a rotating ‘‘cube’’ out of them.

Add Video

Opens the Add Video dialog box allowing you to browse for the desired video file to add into the Layer Pane. Each frame from the video will be treated as a single image layer in the GIF file.

Add Video

From the Add Video dialog box, you can browse for the desired video file, select it, and preview it before inserting it into your animated GIF file.

- **Duration** – opens the Duration dialog box allowing you to select the section of the video file you want to import into GIF Animator. Using the controls beneath the preview window, find the beginning of the sequence you wish to import and click the Mark-In button [ ]. Next, locate the end of the sequence and click the Mark-Out button [ ]. Click OK to return to the Add Video dialog box.
- **Info** – opens the information window displaying a selected file's vital statistics, such as compression scheme and ratio, frame rate, duration, and audio properties.
- **Browse** – opens the Ulead browse dialog box, giving you more control over how you locate and sort your video files.
- **Subject** – the subject line associated with the file, usually the clips title or subject matter.
- **Description** – a brief description of the video file, usually regarding the clip's subject matter.
- **Preview** – displays a real-time preview of the video file.

Adding video images

You can add AVI images by:

- Dragging a video file from any Windows Explorer window, folder, or from PhotoImpact Explorer and dropping it into either the Layer Pane or the workspace.
- Choosing the Layer: Add Video command to open the Add Images dialog box and browse for the desired file.
- Clicking the Add Video button on the Standard toolbar to open the Add Video dialog box and browse for the desired file.

{button ,AL(`addingimage;exportimage;video',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Glossary

The following are terms used throughout the Ulead GIF Animator help:

Animation
Banner Text
Cel
Color Cell
Comment Layer
Contrast
Dither
Frame
GIF
Global Information
Global Palette
Image Layer
Interlace
Local Palette
Looping
Matte
Palette
Perspective
Optimized Palette
Safe Palette

Animation

A series of images arranged in a predetermined sequence that when viewed rapidly generate the appearance of motion or movement.

Banner Text

Text that scrolls across the animation screen in any of the 4 cardinal directions.

Cel

A single image layer in a sequence. This term comes from traditional animation and is synonymous with the words ‘frame’ and ‘image layer’.

Color Cell

A single color unit within the palette. Each cell is given its own index number which establishes where it falls in the color hierarchy.

Comment Layer

A block of information that is only visible when the GIF file is viewed in an editor. It usually contains copyright and authorship information.

Contrast

The distinction between light and dark portions of an image. An image with low or poor contrast consists of many closely related shades. A high contrast image has clearly distinguishable transitions between light and dark areas.

Dither

A method of creating new shades or colors from a pattern of preexisting shades or colors. When images are inserted using palettes other than their own, this option allows you to choose the method for adapting colors from the image's original palette to the palette you selected.

Frame

One image layer of a series. When frames are played sequentially, the objects within the image layers appear to be in motion, or animated.

GIF

A platform independent file format popular for its capability to create compact, yet high quality images.

Global Information

The Global Information Layer in a GIF file contains all the settings that don’t pertain directly to any single image layer.

Global Palette

The palette universally available to every image within an animation clip. This palette is superseded by the Local Palette, but becomes the default palette if an image layer doesn't have a Local Palette. The Global Palette is opened for editing when you select the Edit: Global Palette command.

Note: Cells with an X in them are currently not being used by the image layer.

Image Layer

An Image Layer is a block of data within the GIF file that stores an image, as well as all of its attributes. It is another word for ‘cel’ or ‘frame’.

Interlace

The attribute that, when set, loads the image gradually, giving the appearance of a fade-in. As of yet, web browsers don't fully support animated GIF interlacing during playback, and as such this only works for the first image in the sequence when the animation file is downloaded

Local Palette

The palette contained within a single image layer. If used, the colors on this palette take precedence over the Global Palette. The Local Palette opens for editing when you select the Edit: Local Palette command.

Note: Cells with an X in them are currently not being used by the image layer.

Looping

The number of times the animation repeats when being played. If a number is not chosen then the animation will loop only once as a default.

Matte

A continuous, non-shifting background over which an animation occurs.

Palette

The lookup table that defines the colors available within an image or group of images. In Gif Animator there are 2 kinds of palettes: Global and Local.

Optimized Palette

A method for adding colors the Global Palette created by calculating which colors in an image are most commonly used. These colors are then added to the existing Global Palette but only if you have set the **Automatically expand global palette** option in General Preferences. Choose **Optimized Palette** from the **Build Up Global Palette** dialog box to add a user-defined number of new colors to the Global Palette.

Safe Palette

A method for adding colors to the Global Palette by matching colors from an image's original palette with a predefined set of 216 "web-safe" colors. The matched colors are then added to the existing Global Palette but only if you have set the **Automatically expand global palette** option in General Preferences. Choose **Safe Palette** in the **Build Up Global Palette** dialog box to remap the colors from the original image based on the 'web safe' palette.

Perspective

The view of an image on a two dimensional surface which creates the illusion of three dimensional depth.

Getting Started

Opens the Getting Started tutorial in the online help.

Animation Wizard

Opens the Animation Wizard, which guides you through the process of making a GIF animation, step by step.

Layer Pane

Allows you to choose the display method for the frames listed in the Layer Pane.

- **List** displays the frames using only the layer titles.
- **Thumbnail** shows each frame as an image thumbnail.
- **Relative** shows each frame as an image thumbnail proportionally sized and placed in relation to the other frames.

You can set the default thumbnail size with the View: Thumbnail Size menu command.

Animation Wizard

Ulead GIF Animator makes creating animated GIFs as easy as possible with the Animation Wizard. It takes you through the process of putting together a simple animation in 3 steps:

- Selecting and arranging your images.
- Choosing their display type.
- Setting the default duration each frame is displayed.

When you are finished, you have a simple animation which you can immediately optimize and save or build upon. You can run the Animation Wizard by clicking the File: Animation Wizard menu command or by clicking the corresponding button on the standard toolbar.

{button ,AL(`aniwiz;optiwiz;startwiz;tutgetting',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Thumbnail size

Allows you to define the size of the Layer Pane thumbnails (80x80 to 160x160). If you are in List mode, then selecting one of these options switches the Layer Pane automatically to Thumbnail mode with the preview thumbnails sized according to your selection.

What's new?

Version 3.0
Version 2.0
Version 1.5
Version 1.2

Animation Wizard - now you can let Ulead GIF Animator do all the work for you with this easy to use Animation Wizard. With a few clicks of the mouse, you can be on your way to animating your web in no time at all.

Startup Wizard - offers you 4 different methods for getting started whenever you open Ulead GIF Animator.

Expanded and improved **Optimization Wizard** - the best GIF file optimization system just got better. Now includes enhanced compression and better color palette merging.

Improved **Layer Panel** display modes - in addition to the traditional list mode, the Layer Pane is now capable of displaying thumbnails of each frame, giving you more control over your work environment to better meet your needs.

Startup Wizard

The Startup Wizard appears every time you open Ulead GIF Animator and is designed to facilitate the building of your animation projects. It offers you four different methods for getting started:

- Open the Animation Wizard and have GIF Animator assist you in making a new animation.
- Open a blank animation.
- Open a pre-existing animation.
- Open one of the many sample files included with the GIF Animator program.

You can disable this Startup Wizard by checking the disabling option when the Wizard appears. If you want to enable it again, click the File: Preferences menu command and check the **Enable Startup Wizard dialog box** option on the General tab.

{button ,AL(`aniwiz;optiwiz;tutgetting',0,``,`')} Related Topics

Optimization Wizard

The Optimization Wizard is designed to guide you through the process of streamlining your GIF animations while at the same time maintaining the highest quality image possible. When the process is complete, a summary dialog box appears telling you how large the total GIF animation was before optimization and its new file size after optimization. In most cases, there will be significant differences in file size between the pre- and post- optimization animations. However, in some animations the optimization ratio may be less dramatic due to pixel-level color shifts between the image layers. Because this process is entirely non-destructive, the animation file currently opened in GIF Animator won't be changed. Instead, GIF Animator prompts you to the save the optimized animation as a new file. You can choose to open it immediately in a new GIF Animator program window.

Some things to consider when optimizing your animation:

- **Palette merging** - creates a master palette containing all the most commonly used colors sampled from each image layer. This removes redundancies and merges similar colors in order to produce a highly compact animation file. If you create a merged palette then GIF Animator won't create optimized local palettes to compensate for unique colors in a particular image layer.
- **Dithering** - you can choose to dither the colors of each layer as they are mapped to the Global Optimized Palette. This compensates for missing colors by blending together existing ones from the Global Optimized Palette. If your images are photorealistic and don't contain text, then this is recommended. If your images are text-oriented then you should not dither.
- **Quick Optimization** - After you have defined your optimization settings, you can use them again later without having to go through the Animation Wizard. To do so, make sure you check the **Save as default optimization settings** option on the final page of the Animation Wizard after you've got the settings you like. Then when the time comes to perform another optimization, click the File: Optimize with Presets menu command to immediately apply these settings to your animation.

{button ,AL(`aniwiz;gifoptimize;startwiz',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Optimize with Presets

Applies the default settings you last selected in the Optimization Wizard to the current animation.

Layer Pane display modes

- **List** - displays frames using only the layer titles. This is the most efficient method for getting a comprehensive picture of your animation layout.
- **Thumbnail** - displays frames as thumbnails. These thumbnails are displayed at a fixed size defined in the Preferences dialog box.
- **Relative** - identical to Thumbnail with the exception that each frame is displayed at its original size and placed relative to the frames before and after

Open Video

Opens a digital video file into GIF Animator. Supported file formats include: AVI, MOV, PSD, FLC, FLI, and FLX.

Export Active Desktop Item

Makes the GIF animation a part of the Microsoft Windows 98 / Internet Explorer 4.0 Active Desktop.

Advanced preferences

- **Run Optimization Wizard when saving file** – runs the Optimization every time you save a GIF animation file. This opens the Optimization Wizard dialog box.
- **Optimize with presets** – check this option to bypass the Optimization Wizard each time you save, but to optimize the GIF Animation based on the last saved Optimization Wizard presets. For more on the Optimization Wizard and its presets, click  .
- **Check animation compatibility** – GIF Animator checks the animation being saved to see if it contains any features not universally supported by all web browsers, such a the removal method 'To previous state', and whether or not your animation file contains more than 1 comment block (further increasing the file size unnecessarily).
- **Levels of undo** – specifies the number of levels of undo available to you during editing. The maximum number of undo levels you can have is 200.

{button ,AL(`attributes;preferences',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Undo

Undoes the previous action or actions. The maximum number of undo levels available is 200, which can be set in the Preferences dialog box, Advanced tab.

Pixel Editor

Opens the Pixel Editor, where you can manually modify the pixels within a given image layer.

Pixel Editor

The pixel editor allows you to manually modify the contents of an image file. The following tools are available:

 **Pencil** – edits and draws individual pixels.

 **Box** – draws rectangular areas filled with either the foreground or background color.

 **Bucket** – fills an area of similarly colored pixels with either the foreground or background color.

 **Eraser** – erases pixels and replaces them with either the foreground or background color.

 **Eyedropper** – selects a color from the image and places it as either the foreground or background color.

Undo/Redo – undoes, or redoes, the previous action. The undo levels here are independent of those 'remembered' in GIF Animator's main window.

Zoom In/Out/1:1 – allow you to zoom in, out, or return to the image's actual view.

 **Edit** – opens the Palette Editor dialog box, allowing you to change the image layer's color palette while you work within the Pixel Editor.

To use the foreground color while editing, click the left mouse button; to use the background color, click the right mouse button while editing.

{button ,AL(`edit',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Regenerate frames

Select this command to regenerate an optimized image layer back to its original appearance so that it may be edited.

Video FX

Opens the custom video effect dialog box for the selected effect, where you can define how the effect is applied to the image layer.

Filters

Opens the custom filter dialog box for the selected filter, where you can define how the filter is applied to the image layer.

About Filters and Video Effects

The Filter and Video Effects plug-ins are an ultra-cool component of GIF Animator that allow you to take simple, rather uneventful images and turn them into something else entirely wild and new. They offer extensive design flexibility and expandability. There are two kinds of plug-ins in GIF Animator: Filters and Video Effects.

- **Filters** – Filters listed on this menu are the Adobe Photoshop-compatible 32-bit plug-ins defined in Preferences. Filters work on a single image layer at a time.
- **Video F/X** – Video effects let you create impressive transitions from one frame to another, and video filters let you add impact your animations. Transition effects and animation filters add frames to your basic animation.

Ulead F/X for GIF Animator

F/X for GIF Animator contains an additional 130 custom video transition and filter effects. New transitions include Accordion, Blowout-F/X, Slide-3D, Barn Door-3D, Checker-Build, Dissolve-F/X, Stagger-Build, Split-Clock, Turn-Clock, Fly-F/X, Burn-F/X, Zipper-Film, Twist-Film, Barn Door-Peel, Bar-Push, Split Half-Roll, Spin-Rotate, Diagonal-Slide, Shatter-F/X, Arrows-Wipe, Puddle-Wipe, Whirlpool-3D, Side-Stretch, and many many more. New filters include Throw Stone, Whirlpool, Kaleidoscope, Charcoal, Colored Pen, Punch, Monochrome, Diffuse, Emboss, Blur, and Animation Gradient, Ripple, Water Flow, Pinch, Diffraction, Motion & Blur, Star, Mosaic, Highlight, Emphasize Edges, Vignette, Scratch, Solarization, Animation Texture, to name but a few.

F/X for GIF Animator is available for purchase at the Ulead Web Utilities homepage. Check back regularly for updates, additions, and expansions to the impressive array of Ulead F/X plug-ins available for GIF Animator.

{button ,AL(`addtransiteff;effects',0,`',`')} Related Topics

What's new?

- Version 3.0
- **Version 2.0**
- Version 1.5
- Version 1.2

Pixel Editor – editing your image layers has never been easier with the new, built-in Pixel Editor. Just open the image layer in Pixel Editor and you can immediately enhance or alter it.

Plug-in Support – GIF Animator now supports many custom transitions and filter effects from Ulead's best-selling digital video editing suite, MediaStudio Pro 5.0.

Frame regeneration– rebuild optimized frames so that you can edit them in the Pixel Editor.

200 levels of Undo – GIF Animator now has up to 200 levels of undo.

Enhanced video support – adding digitized video to GIF Animator just got easier with the enhanced video support for AVI, MOV, FLC, FLI, and FLX video file types. The Duration button in the Add Video dialog box allows you to select only the portion of the video you wish to import.

Preview in Browser – preview your animations directly in the browser of your choice to see how the browser handles the animation parameters.

Editing image layers

GIF Animator gives you the power to edit your image layers directly from within the program using the Pixel Editor. This powerful tool allows you to add new dimensions to the image layer with the Pencil, Box, and Bucket tools. With them, you can remove unwanted pixels caused by optimization, redo colors imperfectly matched during color remapping, and draw new images, all without having to open an outside image editing program. The Pixel Editor also gives you the option of editing the image layer's Local Palette, giving you access to any color you wish to add. (If the image layer doesn't contain a Local Palette, then the Global Palette is used instead.)

Often times images downloaded from the net have already been optimized, thereby making it next to impossible to open specific image layers and re-edit them. However, with the Edit: Regenerate Frames menu command, you can easily and quickly restore the image to its approximate previous state. This menu command rebuilds the image layer based on the information contained within previous layers, thus allowing you to edit it in the Pixel Editor or in an outside application.

{button ,AL(`edit',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Frame regeneration

GIF Animator allows you to rebuild, or regenerate, 'broken' frames so that you can open them in the Pixel Editor or an outside image editing program and change their intrinsic appearance. 'Broken' frames are those frames which have already undergone optimization and the resulting image layer no longer contains all the data originally available. By selecting the Edit: Regenerate Frames menu command, you can rebuild an image layer to its closest approximation based on the data contained in previous image layers.

This feature reconstructs a frame out to the limits of the logical screen, removing all transparent areas and giving the image layers the **Do not remove** attribute for the **How to remove** option. Also, you may experience times when some frames are not regenerated properly - this is because the image layer contains more color data than the local and global palettes can account for.

{button ,AL(`edit',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Previewing animations

To preview your animation, click the Start Preview button on the Standard toolbar. The animation is played in the Workspace. To end a preview, click the Stop Preview button on the Standard toolbar. Because each different browser type displays a GIF animation slightly differently, GIF Animator gives you the option to preview your animation directly in the browser of your choice. The two defaults, however, are Microsoft **Internet Explorer** and **Netscape Navigator**, as these are the two most common browsers available. To view your animation in either browser, if they are installed on your computer, simply click their respective icons on the Standard toolbar. **Note**: This only works with saved animations. If you haven't saved your work, then the most recent changes won't be applied to the browser-preview. To view a preview in a different browser, click the View: Preview in Browser button. This opens the **Preview in Browser** dialog box where you can add the browser of your choice to the list. Each time you click this menu command, select the browser you want to use and the animation is opened in it.

{button ,AL(`animabasics',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Video FX

GIF Animator supports many different kinds of video-based effects, each one containing its own unique settings. This includes the transition effects (those effects in the top-half of the Video F/X menu). However, there are some settings that are shared between them all. These are:

- **Effects** – select the type of effect you wish to apply from this drop-down menu. Listed here are all the available transition effects in GIF Animator.
- **Frames** – enter the number of frames you want the transition to be applied over. For smaller, more compact web-oriented animations, set a lower number of frames.
- **Delay time** – enter the duration that each frame is displayed on the screen, in 1/10th of a second measurements.
- **Select image** – allows you to choose the two images the transition occurs between. In the **Source Image** drop-down menu, select either the selected image layer or a blank, color-filled matte. In the **Destination Image**, select either the final image in the transition (usually the image layer immediately following the Source Image layer), or a blank, color-filled matte.

{button ,AL(`addtransiteff;effects',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Filters

GIF Animator supports many different kinds of video-based effects, each one containing its own unique settings. This includes the filter effects (those effects in the bottom-half of the Video F/X menu). However, there are some settings that are shared between them all. These are:

- **Add image filter effect** – enter the number of frames you wish the filter effect to be applied to (these frames are generated automatically by GIF Animator.) Click OK to open the filter effect dialog box.
- **Key frame controls** – the key frame controls, located beneath both preview windows in the filter effect dialog box, allow you to customize the filter's settings at any give point during is duration. These keyframe controls given you the maximum amount of control and variety over the filter as it's applied to the animation. To find out more about how the keyframe controls work, click one of the buttons in the image below.

{button ,AL(`addtransiteff;effects',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Adding video transition effects

Transition effects allow you to create fade-ins from one image to another by inserting new frames into the animation to simulate the effect.

To add a transition effect:

1. Select Video F/X: *Transition Effect* to open the Add Effects dialog box, where *Transition Effect* is the name of the transition effect you want (in GIF Animator all Transition Effects are in the top half of the menu, while Filters are below the menu divider).
2. Enter the number of Frames you want the transition to occur over in the **Frames** entry box.
3. Enter the duration for each frame in the **Delay Time** entry box. This defines the length of time each image is displayed during the animation.
4. Define the custom settings. These vary for each different type of Transition Effect, but usually consist of: direction, x & y axis, and border.
5. Choose your start image. This can be the currently active image layer or an empty background frame. To have an image fade in from “nothing”, select **Matte** from the Start Image drop-down box. To have it fade in from the active layer, choose the image’s layer title from the Start Image drop-down box. If you use the **Matte** option, you can set its size attributes under **Matte dimensions**.
6. Choose your end image. This can be the image layer that follows the currently active image layer or a background frame. If you choose **Matte** from the Destination Image drop-down box, this creates the effect of the active image layer fading to “black”. You can set the Matte size attributes under **Matte dimensions**.
7. Click OK.

{button ,AL(`addbanner;addcolorani;addtransiteff;scrolling',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Frame slide control

Move the slide control to navigate between frames. Flush left is the first frame in the sequence, while flush right is the last frame.

Keyframe slide control

Displays each keyframe in the sequence (represented by diamonds). Click a diamond to make it active (red), allowing you to define the parameters of the filter effect for that particular point in the sequence.

Add keyframe

Adds a keyframe to the current position in the sequence. (The current position in the sequence is determined in the Frame Slide Control.)

Remove keyframe

Removes the selected, active keyframe from the sequence and the keyframe slide control.

Invert keyframes

Reverses, or inverts, the order of the keyframes in the keyframe slide control.

Previous keyframe

Makes the previous keyframe in the sequence active.

Next keyframe

Makes the next keyframe in the sequence active.

Duration

Tells you which frame in the sequence you are currently on.

Speed

Sets the speed for the preview.

Lock

Synchronizes the two preview windows so that when you selection a position in one, the other mirrors it.

Play preview

Plays a preview of the filter effect based on the settings assigned to it.

Adding video filter effects

Video Filter effects allow you to enhance an image layer by adding specialized filters to it, and in the process adding new frames to give the filter effect animation.

To add a filter effect:

1. Select Video F/X: *Filter Effect* to open the Add Image Filter Effect dialog box, where *Filter Effect* is the name of the filter effect you want (in GIF Animator all Filter Effects are in the bottom half of the menu, while Transitions are above the menu divider).
2. Enter the number of image layers you want the filter effect to occur over in the entry box. Click OK. The filter's dialog box opens.
3. Using the keyframe controls, define the custom settings for the filter. Keyframe controls allow you to define the filter's parameters at any given point during the sequence. When the filter is applied, the settings are implemented in a gradual manner, creating a smooth transition from keyframe to keyframe. For more information about the keyframe controls, click on the parts of the image below that you want information on.

4. Click OK.

{button ,AL(`addbanner;addcolorani;addtransiteff;scrolling',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Web Utilities Home

Click the Help: Web Utilities Home to open your default web browser and go to the Web Utilities homepage.

Startup Wizard

Opens the Startup Wizard.

Order Now!

Click the Help: Order Now! Menu command to purchase the full version of Ulead GIF Animator.

Credits:

Online Help: Chris Jones

Program: Steve Wang, Lin-Yaw Wang, and Deuce Wu {mci PLAY NOMENU NOPLAYBAR,JB.WAV}

Internet Explorer

Previews the saved animation in the Microsoft Internet Explorer if it's installed in your computer.

Netscape Navigator

Previews the saved animation in the Netscape Navigator if it's installed in your computer.

Preview in Browser

Opens the Preview in Browser dialog box allowing you to select the browser in which you wish to preview the saved animation.

About Plug-ins

Opens the 'About Plug-ins' help topic telling you where you can download more plug-ins for GIF Animator.

Compatibility issues

Not all browsers display animated GIFs the same way, and as a result some attributes are not rendered properly when loaded into some browsers. Because of this, GIF Animator warns you when your animation contains attributes that may raise cross-browser compatibility concerns. Also, some attributes are listed in the Compatibility Report that are fully supported by all browsers, but may not be conducive to optimal download times. The Compatibility issues are:

- **Interlace** – the browers currently available on the web don't support the interlacing. If any image layers contain this attribute, the Compatibility Report notifies you.
- **Local palettes** – the presence of each local palette can increase your overall file size anywhere from 12 bytes (4 colors) to 768 bytes (256 colors) depending on the number of colors the image layer contains. 1 or 2 Local Palettes generally won't make that much of a difference, but if every layer contains them then your file size could be significantly larger.
- **To previous state** – this Removal Method is not supported by all browsers and as a result your animation may have display problems when viewed in those browsers.
- **2 or more comment blocks** – as with Local Palettes, comment blocks can unnecessarily increase your animation's file size. Try to contain all the information to a single comment block if possible.

{button ,AL(`compactgif;gifoptimize;usingglob;usingloc',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Interlace

The browers currently available on the web don't support the interlacing. Some of the image layers in your animation have the interlacing attribute set.

Local Palettes

The presence of each local palette can increase your overall file size anywhere from 12 bytes (4 colors) to 768 bytes (256 colors) depending on the number of colors the image layer contains. 1 or 2 Local Palettes generally won't make that much of a difference, but if every layer contains them then your file size could be significantly larger.

Some of the image layers in your animation contain Local Palettes.

To Previous State

This Removal Method is not supported by all browsers and as a result your animation may have display problems when viewed in those browsers. Some of image layers contain the 'To previous state' removal method.

2 or more Comment blocks

As with Local Palettes, comment blocks can unnecessarily increase your animation's file size. Try to contain all the information to a single comment block if possible.

There are 2 or more Comment blocks in your animation.

Wait for user input

Some image layers in your animation have the 'Wait for user input' attribute selected. This attribute is not currently supported by most web browsers, and as a consequence will not work unless the animation is being played in a dedicated GIF viewer

Export Html Code

This generates the appropriate code for embedding your animated GIF into an HTML document. It creates a stand-alone HTML file with the **<IMG SRC>** tag, which you can cut and paste into your own HTML document, as well as creating the GIF file associated with the tag.

Export Video File

Create a Windows video file of the current GIF animation. Output file formats include: AVI and MOV.

Resample

Resizes the image layer. You can select multiple layers and resize them all at once by pressing Ctrl+click or Shift+click as you select them.

Moving Sprite

Duplicates the selected layer(s) while at the same time allowing you to automatically adjust the X- and Y- offsets. This is especially useful for creating moving sprites in a single step.

Background Merge

Merges the selected layer(s) with a chosen background layer. For this to work, the layer must have its transparency enable, otherwise GIF Animator doesn't know which areas to merge.

Select All

Selects all the image layers in the Layer Pane.

Invert Selection

De-selects the chosen image layers and selects everything else. If all image layers are selected when this command is applied, then everything is subsequently de-selected.

Plug-in Filters preferences

Enter the location of any Adobe Photoshop-compatible 32-bit plug-ins you would like to use in Ulead GIF Animator. You can enter up to 4 separate folders. **Note**: Subfolders located within a parent folder defne are included with the parent folder.

All changes made to this tab will take effect after GIF Animator is restarted.

{button ,AL(`attributes;preferences',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Add Scrolling

Opens the Scrolling effect dialog box allowing you to take an image layer and create a scrolling transition, moving it off 'screen' and replacing it with a new layer.

Reverse Order

Reverses the order of selected image layers.

What's new?

- **Version 3.0**
- Version 2.0
- Version 1.5
- Version 1.2

Improved Palette Building – Using a new palette engine, now your colors are more true to the original image when importing them from other image editors. Select which color channel takes precedence over others when selecting colors global and local palettes.

Multiple Selection of Image Layers – Select multiple image layers in the Layer Pane with just a click of the mouse.

Expanded Plug-in Support – While this version of GIF Animator still supports the Video Effects from version 2.0, we've expanded its capabilities to include all Adobe Photoshop-compatible 32-bit plug-ins. Now you can use your favorite image editing filters and effects directly in GIF Animator.

Enhanced Frame Regeneration– The Regenerate Frames menu command now rebuilds the entire frame out to the edges of the logical screen, making it even easier to edit images outside GIF Animator and then import them again without having to reposition them.

Expanded Video Support – Not only can you import from a wide variety of video file formats, you can also output your GIF animations as either a Windows AVI or Apple Quicktime file.

Automated moving sprites – Use the new Moving Sprite command and an existing image layer to automatically create a moving, animated sprite in your animation.

Improved Merging – Select as many transparent layers as you want and merge them with a common background layer.

Image Layer Resampling – Resize layers directly within GIF Animator - you can resize as many layers as exist in the animation at once using the same settings.

New Effect: Scrolling Image – This effects lets you create sliding transitions using image layers.

HTML Tag Generator – Generate the appropriate HTML code for embedding your animation into your web page instantly.

Animation Packager – Create stand alone animations that don't require a web browser to be viewed, or create custom animated greeting cards to send to friends and relatives.

Expanded GIF89a Support – Optional GIF89a attribute 'Wait for user input' now supported.

Reverse Order – Reverse the order of your image layers with a single click.

Adding a scrolling effect

The Add Scrolling dialog box allows you to take an image and create a scrolling transition out it.

To create a scrolling effect:

1. Select the image layer you want to start the sequence with.
2. Choose the Layer: Add Scrolling menu command to open the Add Scrolling dialog box.
3. Select the direction you want the images to rotate in from the **Direction** buttons.
4. Select the number of **Frames** you want the rotation to occur over, as well as the duration each image is displayed (**Delay**).
5. Select **Use Background** to have the selected image layer scroll into either another layer or the background color.
6. Click OK.

Note: When you select **Use Background**, all of the FX-generated frames are assigned the **How to Remove** attribute of **Do not remove**. If this option is not selected, then all of the FX-generated frames are assigned the **How to Remove** attribute of **To background color**.

{button ,AL(`addbanner;addcolorani;addtransiteff;scrolling',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Export Video

The Export Video dialog box allows you define the parameters used when creating a video from a GIF file.

- **File Name** The name of the file you are saving.
- **Save As Type** The file format the file will be saved as. Available formats include AVI, QT, and MOV, among others.
- **Subject** Information saved with file, describing the content. This information is only visible when you view it from within a video editing program, or in dialog boxes for importing videos.
- **Description** The same as Subject, but allows you to input more information.

Other options include:

- **Frame Rate** Defines the number of frames the new video contains per second. For the best results, you should use a frame rate of 15.
- **Frame Size** Resizes the logical screen of the animation to the size you specify.
- **Keep Aspect Ratio** Maintains the proportions of the logical screen when resizing. If this option is not checked, the logical screen is defined strictly according to the values entered in the Frame Size option.
- **Target Playback Drive** Optimizes the animation for playback on a specific type of hard drive, based on the speed of said hard drive. For best results, leave this set to Custom (this lets GIF Animator output it using generic settings good for most hard drives.
- **Check Data Rate** Defines the speed of the target playback drive when optimizing the animation. If using Custom in Target Playback Drive, leave this option unchecked.
- **Pad Frames for CD-ROM** Optimizes the animation for playback on a CD-ROM drive, padding frames to compensate for frame drop-out.
- **Compression** Sets the compression codec to be used when compiling the video. The only codecs available from this list are ones you already have installed on your machine. For no compression, select None.
- **Quality** Sets the frame-quality/compression ratio. The higher the quality you choose, the less compression applied. Less compression results in larger file sizes.
- **Key Frame** Creates special, less-compressed 'key frames' at the specified interval. Key frames help maintain quality by interleaving the video with higher quality frames.
- **Data Type** Outputs the frames of the video at the bit-depth specified in this menu. Not all bit-depths are available with some codecs. The lower the bit-depth, the smaller the resulting video will be (in some cases, this results in a lower quality as well). For GIF animations, you can safely use a bit-depth of 8 as the GIF file format can only go this high.

{button ,AL(`exportimage;html;importfileform;video',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Exporting videos

You can export any animation as a video file in GIF Animator in order to save your animations in a file format more conducive to higher quality and higher frame-rates.

To export an animation as a video:

1. Click the File: Export - Video File menu command.
2. When the Export Video dialog box opens, enter the file name, subject line, and a short description.
3. To set up the parameters of your video, click the **Options** button.
4. When you're done, click OK and GIF Animator creates a video file of your GIF animation.

Note:When exporting GIF animations as video files, the video frame rate is calculated by dividing 100 by the average delay time from all of the image layers. The maximum frame rate allowed is 30 frames per second. (For example, if an animation's average delay time is 45, then its frame rate per second when output as video will be 2.2.) Videos are also output as 24-bit files (true color) with the frame size determined by the dimensions of the logical screen.

{button ,AL(`addtransiteff;animabasics;exportimage;html;video',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Resampling image layers

You can resize the image layers in your animation with the Edit: Resample menu command. This is especially useful taking animations that a bit too large for web use (especially ones created from imported video), and making them smaller and more compact.

To add resample image layers:

1. Select the layer or layers you want to resize. To select more than one image layer, press Ctrl as you click the layer, or Shift to select an range of layers at once.
2. Click the Edit: Resample menu command. The Resample dialog box opens.
3. Under **Resample Method**, select how you want to resize the image. Select **Keep Aspect Ratio** to keep the image layer's basic dimensions through the size resampling. You can adjust the width and height either as a percentage or using pixels.
4. Click OK.

Note: Select the **Keep Relative Position** option to have the resampled image layer retain its approximate postion in the logical screen of the workspace. Relative position is determined by the upper left-hand corner of the image layer. Also, keep in mind that some dithering may occur and parts of the image layer may be blended with the background in ordre to maintain higher quality.

{button ,AL(`changeattrglob;compactgif;posimalay',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Creating HTML

GIF Animator lets you output the corresponding HTML code for your GIF animation quickly and easily. All you need to do is paste the code generated into your HTML editor and make sure that your GIF file is in the same directory as the web page.

To output HTML code for a GIF Animation:

- Click the File: Export - HTML menu command to create an HTML file with the code embedded within.
- Click the Edit: Copy HTML menu command to send the HTML code to the Windows clipboard. In your HTML editor, just click the Paste command to insert it into a page.

{button ,AL(`exportimage;gifoptimize;importfileform;useclipboard',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Creating moving sprites

Use the Layer: Moving Sprite command to take a string of image layers and adjust them in order to create seamless animation with the 'sprite'. This works best if you take a static image layer and duplicate it 5 or 6 times. Then you can use the Moving Sprite command to reposition all the layers in relation to the original one, thus creating an animated element in a single step.

To create moving sprites:

1. Click the Layer: Moving Sprite menu command. The Moving Sprite dialog box opens.
2. Select the image layers you want to use in your sprite animation. Usually these layers are duplicates of a single, static image. When you select the layers, keep in mind that all changes to those layers' coordinates are made in relation to the first selected layer's positioning.
3. Enter the **X-** and **Y- offset** to be applied to each image layer. This attribute change is applied to each layer based on the modified image layer before it, so the effects are cumulative. (For example, if you enter values of 2 for both the X and Y offset, then the first shifted image is adjusted by 2,2. The second shifted image is then adjusted by 4,4, the third by 6,6 and so on.) **Note:** The first image selected will *not* be moved at all - the **X-** and **Y- Offset** is applied *only* to the images that come after the first one.
4. Click OK.

Note: To complete the animation, after the Moving Sprite dialog box closes, select all the modified layers and set their removal method to **To previous state** and give them a suitable delay.

{button ,AL(`addingimage;attributes;changeattrglob;duplimage;posimalay',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Merging a common background

GIF Animator makes it easy to take a common, shared background and merge other image layers with it, each layer becoming its own discreet entity with the new background blended into it. Only transparent image layers can utilize this function.

To merge a common background:

1. Click the Edit: Background Merge menu command. The Background Merge dialog box opens.
2. Select the common background from the **Background** menu.
3. Select the layers you want to merge with the background from the list.
4. Click OK.

Note: Once you click OK, each selected layer is individually merged with the background and replaced.

{button ,AL(`addingimage;cropimage;duplimage;exportimage;posimalay;resample;useclipboard',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Adding additional plug-in filters

To expand GIF Animator's range, you can load 32-bit Adobe Photoshop compatible plug-ins and use them on individual image layers. If an image contains a transparent region, this portion of the image is treated as a mask and the filter is applied only to the non-transparent portion.

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To add additional plug-ins:

1. Click the File: Preferences menu command. The Preferences dialog box opens.
2. Click the Plug-in Filters tab.
3. Enter the path and folder information for the plug-ins you wish to use.
4. Click OK.

Note: You'll need to restart GIF Animator before these changes take effect.

{button ,AL(`addbanner;addcolorani;addtransiteff;cubeffect;effects;scrolling',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Ulead WebUtilities Website

Visit the official Ulead WebUtilities website for more great tools. Download trial versions of some of our hottest software, such as **Ulead COOL 3D 2**, **FX Razor**, and **Button.Applet** just to name a few. Be sure to visit us frequently and check out our online **tutorials for GIF Animator** and other software. You can also download **free goodies**, such as GIF animations, Photo Viewer, and free FIOs to expand Ulead GIF Animator's import capablities.

Point your browser to: http://www.webutilities.com for more.

Copy HTML Code

Copies the appropriate HTML code to the Windows clipboard so that you can easily embed the GIF animation into an HTML document.

Properties

Displays the GIF animation file's properties.

Export Animated Package

Opens the Animation Packager allowing you to create stand-alone animated GIFs that can be viewed on your desktop simply by double-clicking them.

Animated Package

The Animation Packager program lets you take an existing GIF animation and package it as a stand alone animation that users can view on their desktop with out having to open in an image editor, a GIF animator or a web browser. This is the perfect way to send digital greeting cards to friends and family across the Internet.

To create an animated package:

1. After you finish putting together your animation, click the File: Export - Animated Package menu command. This opens the Animation Packager.
2. Select a **Message Box** style. This is the graphic that any messages you enter in the package are displayed in.
3. Add a sound file to be played along with the animation.
4. From the **Start Frame Position** menu, select the positon on the Windows Desktop the animation will begin playing at.
5. From the **End Frame Position** menu, select the final position on the Windows Desktop where the animation will terminate itself.
6. In the **Messages** entry box, enter a message or two to be displayed when someone runs the animated package. You can modify the **Font** and **Font Color** of the message by clicking the appropriate buttons.
7. In the **Generate Executable File** entry line, type in the name of the animated package file.
8. Click OK. The file is generated in the location specified in step 6 with the name you entered.

{button ,AL(`exportimage',0,`',`')} Related Topics

Wait for user input

This image layer attribute lets you freeze a frame until the person viewing it clicks on it, at which point the animation proceeds. This GIF89a feature is not currently supported by most web browsers.

WebUtilities Home

Opens the help topic describing how you can find more information about using GIF animator.

Selecting multiple image layers

In the Layer Pane, you can now (as of version 3.0) select multiple image layers at one time rather than using the checkboxes. This enables you to manipulate the selected layers all at once by changing options on the Attributes toolbar.

You can also still use the Global Attribute Change command to apply the settings of one image layer to the others, but if you're going to be making quick changes on the fly, selecting layers in the Layer Pane and then applying changes to them directly is the fastest way to go.

To select more than one layer in the Layer Pane:

- Press the Ctrl key as you click on the layers you want to select
  Or
- Press the Shift key and click the beginning and end layers to select the entire range in-between.

{button ,AL(`changeattrglob',0,`',`')} Related Topics