ProStationAudio User Manual

ProStationAudio Installation

Installing the application is extremely easy.

- If you got a compressed archive just use a decompressor to unpack the contents to the preferred area on your hard drive.

- If you got the application drawer in uncompressed form, drag it to the preferred area on your hard drive.

In both cases, the application files are self-contained into a drawers hierarchy. Move the top drawer where preferred and you're ready to start, no installation of system libraries or extensions is needed.

To launch the application open the top drawer and double click on the application icon.

But first, let's check the tooltypes list .

Tooltypes Check

This section explains how to configure the basic tooltypes for a quick start. For an extended and complete tooltypes description please see the Reference Manual.

To configure basic tooltypes:

- On the Workbench screen, click once on the application icon, then select the **Icons->Information...** menu item.

- A window opens. Proceed by editing the tooltypes as explained below.

Disk buffers configuration:

VMM_BUFFERS: Add this tooltype to change the amount of memory allocated to the virtual memory manager. This setting influences the amount of tracks that can be played in realtime. Increasing the amout of memory allocated allows to handle more tracks at once but also increases the delay between the instant you issue the **Play** command and the time the system actually starts playing.

Set:
- **VMM_BUFFERS=SMALL** for a 16MB RAM system

- **VMM_BUFFERS=MEDIUM** for a 32MB RAM system

- **VMM_BUFFERS=LARGE** for a 64MB RAM system

Audio board configuration:

OUT_DRIVER: Add this tooltype to select an audio driver other than the built-in one.

Set:
- **OUT_DRIVER=**<driver name>

The corresponding driver must be present into the Drivers drawer. Drivers are available for downloading on the AudioLabs server.

Enabling PowerPC code

The application can take advantage of the PowerPC CPU if present. PowerPC code can be enabled/disbled via tooltypes.

To enable PowerPC code:

- Be sure you have ppc.library v46 or higher (PowerUp kernel) in your system. If you use a different kernel you need some form of PowerUp compatibility, please contact you kernel's developer for details.
- On the Workbench screen, click once on the application icon, then select the **Icons->Information...** menu item.
- A window opens. Add this tooltype (or edit the tooltype if already present): **USE_PPC_POWERUP**

Now you can launch the application and take advantage of the PowerPC speed for accelerating realtime operations.

Settings for Draco workstations

The application is compatible with the Draco audio-video workstation. As the Draco lacks the standard Amiga chipset and the application uses by default a driver for the standard chipset, you have to edit the icon tooltypes to change the default driver.

To use the application on Draco:

- Check the **Drivers** drawer (inside the top application drawer) for the presence of the ToccataOut driver file.

- On the Workbench screen, click once on the application icon, then select the **Icons->Information...** menu item.

- A window opens. Add this tooltype (or edit the tooltype if already present):
  OUT_DRIVER=TOCCATAOUT

Now you can launch the application on your Draco.

If the ToccataOut driver is not present in your distribution you can download it from the AudioLabs server at: http://www.audiolabs.it

Optimization

Use large disk buffers

Using larger disk buffers reduces the global seek time and increases the transfer rate.

☐ On the Workbench screen, click once on the application icon, then select the **Icons->Information...** menu item.
☐ A window opens. Add this tooltype (or edit the tooltype if already present):

VMM_BUFFERS=LARGE (if you have at least 64MB RAM)
or
VMM_BUFFERS=MEDIUM (if you have at least 32MB RAM)
or
VMM_BUFFERS=SMALL (if you have at least 16MB RAM)

Use larger disk block sizes

Using larger disk block sizes reduces the global seek time and increases the transfer rate. OS3.1 includes a special version of the tool HDToolBox that lets you edit the size of disk blocks of any of your partitions. You'll then need to format your modified partitions. Backup your files first!

Be careful with disk caching software

Use third party disk caching software with great care.

The application has its own optimized disk management system. Disk caching software may sometimes help getting more tracks but sometimes degrades performances as disk caching consumes extra CPU time.

As a rule of thumb, if you have a very fast CPU and a slow disk, disk caching software may help.

In any case, if you use caching software please experiment also running the application without it and compare the results.

Disable realtime animations

Disabling realtime animations (peak meters, SMPTE counter, ...) saves a surprising amount of CPU time.

Start disabling the peak meters first (big saving), then the SMPTE counter and cursor (limited saving) if necessary.

To enable/disable animation use the **Settings** menu.

Close plugins windows

Close plugins windows when possible. Possible animated objects, such as peak meters, consume CPU time.

Join tracks

Sometimes it's possible to reduce the number of tracks required for a project just by having some care when placing audio objects.

If you have non-overlapping objects on different tracks move them to a single track: even empty (silent) track-segments must be processed by the mixing console and the plugins system.

If you join tracks then switch off the unused ones.

Use the RAM: drive

Use the RAM: drive. If you work with non linear tracks made of smaller objects rather than one-shot long tracks, try putting some recordings in RAM:, then use the Link function when importing.

If the project is small enough, just move the whole project in RAM: and work there. REMEBER TO TRANSFER IT TO A DISK BEFORE SWITCHING OFF YOU COMPUTER.

This second solution is more handy as, when reopening the project later, you'll be able to work immediatly on it regardless its location. In case of Linking instead, you'll have to remeber which files were linked from RAM: and you'll have to copy them there before opening the project.

Avoid running concurrent programs that are not multitasking-friendly

Avoid running concurrent programs that are not multitasking-friendly. The application is strongly based on the multitasking enviroment and is fully system compliant. Please don't mix it with software that breaks these rules.

Defragment your disk.

Defragment your disk often. A fragmented disk increases the time needed to access audio files during relatime operations. Preferably keep a separate partition for audio.

Adding Plugins

The application capabilities can be extended by adding audio plugins. Plugins fully integrate with the application by opening control windows on the application screen and exchanging control and processing informations in realtime. Also, plugins settings are passed to the application, and back to the plugins, for letting you store and restore settings inside your own projects.

The application scans the **DSPPlugIns** drawer (located inside the application top drawer) when launched. Each file is verified as a valid plugin and, in case, added to the list of available plugins.

To add a new plugin:

- If you got a compressed plugin just use a decompressor to unpack the contents to a temporary area on your hard drive, then drag the plugin to the **DSPPlugIns** drawer.

- If you got a plugin in uncompressed form, just drag it to the **DSPPlugIns** drawer.

Please note that, as the application scans the plugins drawer at launch time, if you add a plugin while the application is running it will not be detected until next launch.

To update a plugin with a different version:
- Be sure no istance of the plugin be in use (if there's no plugin window open, this doesn't mean it isn't in use: check all the insert points for occurrences of the plugin name) or better shut down the application.

- Open a shell and type **avail flush** or, alternatively, reset the system.

- Proceed with adding the new plugin as explained above.

Alternatively you can start switching on the system and proceed with installing the plugin update before launching the application. This would save you the steps explained above.

You can download plugins from the AudioLabs server at: http://www.audiolabs.it/plugins

Adding Drivers

The application by default selects the built-in SoftMary driver for enabling playback on stock Amiga systems. This allows to run the program without an extra audio card.

If an audio card is present you may want to take advantage of it from inside the application. To do this you need the software driver for your card to be present in the **Drivers** drawer (located inside the application top drawer).

To enable the software driver for your card:

- If you got a compressed driver just use a decompressor to unpack the contents to a temporary area on your hard drive, then drag the driver to the **Drivers** drawer.

- If you got a driver in uncompressed form, just drag it to the **Drivers** drawer.

- On the Workbench screen, click once on the application icon, then select the **Icons->Information...** menu item.

- A windows opens: add this tooltype (or edit the tooltype if already present): **OUT_DRIVER=<driver name>**

Setting up the desktop

When lauching the application a screen mode requester pops up to let you choose the preferred video mode. The application supports drivers for every OS-compliant retargetable graphic system.

When terminating the application, a requester offers you the option of saving the current status, including the screen mode, windows positions, windows sizes and other preferences.

If you decide to save the current status, the application will recall your preferred screen mode and won't display anymore the screen mode requester at subsequent launches.

Should you wish to change your video settings:

- On the Workbench screen, click once on the application icon, then select the **Icons->Information...** menu item.

- A window opens. Add this tooltype (or edit the tooltype if already present): **SHOW_SCR_SELECTOR**

Now you can launch the application and get the screen mode requester back. Proceed as usual, then, when terminating, save the current status if you want to make your new mode the default one. Remember to complete the operation by removing the **SHOW_SCR_SELECTOR** tooltype to prevent the screen mode requester from showing up at next launch.