

Introduction to Digital AV

Software used:

Pictures To Exe (P2E) available from WNsoft (www.WNSoft.com)
Price about £55 for Essentials Version and £100 for Deluxe version. (Free upgrade to P2E version 9 –due out this winter)

Audacity – free music manipulation software.

My Basic workflow steps:

1. Collect and prepare images in a single folder using Photoshop or similar software. I use same size images as for PDI competitions 1400x 1050 pixels.
2. Run P2E to sequence images and set transitions.
3. Create Titles – either in Photoshop or in P2E.
4. Prepare commentary and music using Audacity and create an MP3 soundtrack.
5. Load the soundtrack into P2E
6. Refine the AV sequence by making adjustments, adding in titles, adding animation, etc. (This may take many iterations – hours of fun!)
7. Finally in P2E create an EXE file or Video (MP4) file depending on where the AV is to be shown.

Some features that help to make a good AV:

1. A good story line helps but good photographs with appropriate music is essential.
2. Have an informative introduction sequence.
3. The ending sequence is sometimes difficult but quite important. (A sudden ending – either of the music or the image sequence can spoil a good AV)
4. Vary transitions types and times to add interest. But don't overdo!
5. Link the images and the soundtrack – Essential when doing a commentary.
6. If you can find “third images” when fading from one image to the next, this will help the flow.
7. Keep the image size on screen the same – (although I have seen very good AV's where this rule is broken).
8. When zooming-in or panning across an image I use larger file sizes. (eg instead of 1400x1050 – use 2800x2100. It will look the same on screen but give better resolution when zoomed in).