Photo Essays & ProShow Gold Tips

Following my workshop on Photo Essays at Springbrook 2008 & 2011 (using Photodex ProShow Gold) I had questions about resources for shows such as curtain images, sound effects and tutorials. This is a handy list of the most valuable information I have found.   *Ken Johnson*

The features of this software can be found on the company site:
>**Software Specs:** http://www.photodex.com/products/proshowgold/
This software only runs on computers with Windows operating system. Mac users cannot use this with the Macintosh operating system. The features are similar to iMovie on the Mac.
>**Product Manuals:** http://www.photodex.com/support/resources
There is a lot to learn by watching the shows of others and adapting ideas to your own photography.
For all Photodex Shared Shows: Right-Click on the show and select "Full Screen" (Esc to exit).
>**Spotlighted Shows:** http://www.slideshowblog.com/category/spotlighted-show/
>**Contest Winners:** http://www.slideshowblog.com/category/contests/

USER GROUPS
There are two ProShow User Groups that contain a lot of helpful information. I believe you must create your own login account to access the files of these groups.
1) Yahoo Group
>**Proshow Gold:**   http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/proshowgroup/
>**Proshow Producer:**   http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/psproducer/
>On the Yahoo group, click on the "Files" link on the menu along the left border of the home page. This is full of stuff such as tutorials, curtains, sounds, etc.

2) ProShow-Enthusiasts
>http://www.proshowenthusiasts.com/ Forum for both Gold and Producer

3) Pro-Show-International
>http://www.pro-show-international.com/ Currently seems to be inactive

SOUNDS:
>http://www.findsounds.com/
>http://www.freeplaymusic.com/
>http://simplythebest.net/
>http://www.soundjay.com/
>http://www.incompetech.com/m/c/royalty-free/
>http://soundbible.com/
>http://dilyla.com/audio_links.htm

VIDEO CLIP RESOURCES:
>Search YouTube for Video Backgrounds – Use behind Captions and as Title Slide
>YouTube Downloader Software: http://www.youtubedownloaderhd.com/
>Royalty Free Video Clips at:
>Digital Juice www.digitaljuice.com
>Animation Factory www.animationfactory.com
>Footage Firm www.footagefirm.com

Recording narration for slide programs.
I use the Windows "Sound Recorder". You should have it on your computer, but it is rather hidden.
In Windows XP, Click Start and choose the "All Programs".
>Look for: Accessories > Entertainment > Sound Recorder.

If you are going to be using this often, you might want a shortcut to it on your desktop. When it comes up on the "Entertainment" menu: With the RIGHT mouse button click on "Sound Recorder" and hold the mouse button while you drag the 'Sound Recorder' to an vacant area on your desktop. Release the mouse button and choose "Copy". CAUTION: Do NOT do this with the LEFT mouse button or you will MOVE the shortcut to your Desktop.

If you don't find a microphone jack on your computer - usually next to the earphone jack - look at the back of the computer and find the sound card. That should be where your speakers plug in. The microphone jack is usually the pink colored one.

If you Google for ---- windows sound recorder ---- you will find other recorder software
http://teach.fcps.net/trt15/Sound/WSR.htm Some good instructions on using Sound Recorder
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sound_Recorder_%28Windows%29

If you use ProShow software, I like to make short narratives that I can add to the show as "slide sounds".
This links the narration to the start of a slide - however it can span several slides if you choose that
option. You can also use "offset" (negative or positive seconds) to start the narration before or after the
slide starts. Your background sound track continues to play behind the slide sounds. You can control
whether to lower the background sound during the slide sounds. ProShow gives lots of control over
volumes.

TUTORIALS:
- There are many tutorials on the user group sites
- Example tutorial - Creating PNG images (with transparent areas)
- http://www.photodex.com/share/dgangloff/67c27mg4
- More of Dale's excellent tutorials:
  http://www.photodex.com/share/dgangloff/49994mg4 (Notice there are 5 Pages of thumbnails)
  http://www.photodex.com/share/dgangloff   (Notice there are 2 Pages of thumbnails)
- Photodex tutorials. Caution: Some of these tips require ProShowProducer rather than
  ProShowGold. http://kb.photodex.com/ On this page choose under "Help by Product" menu. That
  will open a list of topics – some have tutorial videos.
- Photodex now with v4.5 has an outstanding user manual (378 pages) and it is written so that it
  can be read from the beginning to learn the basics and keep reading to learn more detail. It is
  available on the web, however a printed one ships with the boxed product.
  Product Manuals: http://kb.photodex.com/
- Proshow Producer Tutorials:
  http://www.mycityphotoguide.com/Tutorials/Tutorials.aspx
  http://doitallinproducer.com/
  http://choicebackgroundsserver.com/articles.html
  http://davro-digital.com/?cat=310

Ken Johnson's Photodex Proshow sharing site:
        http://www.photodex.com/share/ishowslides/24kadmg4

NEW TRANSITIONS
New transitions have been added. Several I particularly like are "Page… (several various ones", "Scroll…(
left and right)", "Fade to Black – Blown Out", "Dissolve – Dip to Black (also other colors)".

SIMULATE A FLASH PHOTO
The white flash you see is a brief (0.1 second) white slide with the camera sound wave attached. The
transition between each of the photos is the Starburst-Out. (v4.5 update – there is a new transition
"Camera Flash – Basic" which simulates this effect – I like to use it at 0.1 sec)

        The sequence is:
        Starburst Out transition at .1 sec
        White slide set at 0.1 sec (with camera sound)
        Starburst Out transition at 0.1 sec
        Photo
        Starburst Out transition at 0.1 sec
        White slide at .1 sec (with Camera sound)
        New photo...
        etc.

IDENTIFYING PEOPLE IN GROUPS & FAMILY PHOTOS

A Tutorial - Identifying people in a group with PSG
> http://www.photodex.com/share/debngar/bd9kamg4
> This is written for using with ProShow Producer that has "key frames" That is the "KF" she is talking about. But you can do the same thing with PSG using multiple copies of the same slide.

This show has a lot of names as captions:
> http://www.photodex.com/share/im42n8/9ag77mg4
> I'm sure it was done with Producer. Still some good ideas.
> This show would probably be better as a PowerPoint so the viewer could change slides at their own pace. It takes time to study the names and photos.

This is one of the most beautiful family shows I've seen.
> http://www.photodex.com/sharing/viewshow.html?fl=2890375&alb=0
> The colorizing of the photos is great.
> http://www.photodex.com/share/hardsoftware/74pwmgg4

> Here are two more of his shows:
> http://www.photodex.com/share/hardsoftware/9cmdxgg4
> http://www.photodex.com/sharing/viewshow.html?fl=2798351&alb=0

EFFECTS USED IN N4C SHOWS:
The Theater Marquee with Text Crawl, and the Typewriter have been used to introduce Best of N4C shows. Those effects are available at:
http://www.visisketchpro.com/Goodies/ProShowStuff.html

TIPS FOR BETTER SHOWS
- Use special effects sparingly. Don't distract the viewer from the message.
- Too much panning and zooming will make the audience dizzy
- Make movements slowly to give the audience time to view the scene
- Transitions – the effect and the timing – can enhance a show or be a distraction.
- Start out strong and end strong. (Put your best photography at both ends of the show.)
- Don't duplicate. Don't use the same photo or a very similar one a second time.
- Look for images that make interesting fade transitions from one to another.
- Avoid changing from portrait to landscape to portrait, etc. Use transitions or complimentary backgrounds to make them flow from one to the other.
- Think about the show while shooting so you have all the shots to tell the story.
- If you have a sign that tells the location, don't duplicate it with a caption.
- Don't bore the audience with too much of the same thing. Add variety.
- Give the viewer time to read captions
- Music background is very important to set the mood and may become difficult to select.

General Thoughts on Transitions and Zooms

Try zooming around 5% (in or out) for every slide that is a single picture when not doing anything else special with it. Some movement draws the viewer's attention. Unless going for a special effect relative to the presentation, the A/B fade is a great transition to use exclusively. My personal rule is that the pictures need to make the show and they should not be diminished by overusing effects.

RESOLUTION AND IMAGE SIZE FOR SHOWS
This is a frequent question. First, ProShow cannot accept Raw image files (.NEF, .CR2). Use JPG, PSD, PNG or TIFF. ProShow does not recognize different Color Spaces, so always use sRGB for shows.

The following advice is from Photodex Customer service:
The resolution for your show will depend on your intended output. Your images should not be lower than the intended output resolution of your show as this could lead to fuzziness or pixelation. I would suggest that you always use the highest resolution for your images (usually the original resolution from the camera). I would recommend not resizing your images prior to importing them into ProShow. Since the

quality of your final output often depends on the resolution of your show, if you were to re-size your images, you would be limiting the option you have for quality at the time of output.

The other area to pay attention to is the Aspect Ratio. If you have an image that is in a resolution of 1920x1200 and are creating a 1080p (1920x1080) show then there could be some distortion when trying to fit that image into the area (or a part may need to be cut off). There is a 'scaling' option in ProShow to help you deal with this. You can adjust the scaling of an image by:

1) Double click on the slide you wish to change
2) Click on the Layers button and the Layer Settings tab
3) In the Layer Settings area on this window, change the scaling accordingly

This will adjust how your image is scaled to fit the shape of the slide. You can apply this to multiple slides by right clicking on the drop down box. You can set the default behavior for this in Edit -> Preferences -> Show Defaults.

COMMERCIAL LINKS
Following are a sampling of resources for Styles, Backgrounds, Music, Templates, etc. Many of these are developed by users and charge to download them. Some also have tutorials and other links which might be helpful. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list – just examples of all that is out there…..

http://movietools.info/ Background Animations – Many Free
http://trulytangotemplates.wordpress.com/ Templates, slide styles and kits for ProShow
http://www.theframelocker.com/ Styles, Transitions, Frames, Backgrounds, Decorative Elements
http://seemonasblog.blogspot.com/   Styles, templates, graphics
http://www.visisketchpro.com/   Effects, sketch, captions
http://outsidethebox.name/   Transitions, styles
http://fenimorephotovideos.com/PSP/Products/ProductsPage.html styles, templates, tutorials
http://dilyla.com/   Add-ons for Proshow Producer & Gold
http://dilyla.com/graphic_links.htm A long list of Graphics Resources, Backgrounds, Fonts
http://www.animationsforvideo.com/index.htm Digital Hotcakes animations, video effects
http://www.catooh.com/   – Media Marketplace sounds, videos
http://www.pond5.com/ - Stock Video, sound effects, music, photos