

Using Audio Narration with Captivate 3.0

Presented by:
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About Nad

- ASTD member
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What we'll cover

- Pros and cons of audio
- Decisions to make about audio
- Whose voice?
- Production workflow
- Writing the script and storyboard
- Recording audio overview
- Recording setup
- Recording audio narration directly into Captivate
- Using prerecorded audio files
- Editing an audio file in Captivate

Note: This presentation assumes a basic knowledge of Captivate functionality.

Pros and Cons of Audio Narration

| Pros | Cons |
|--|---|
| Increases impact of the Flash movie. | Increases production time and cost. |
| Appears more professional. | Increases project file size. |
| User can turn audio on or off if needed. | Harder to change after completed (especially if you use an outside narrator). |

Whose Voice?

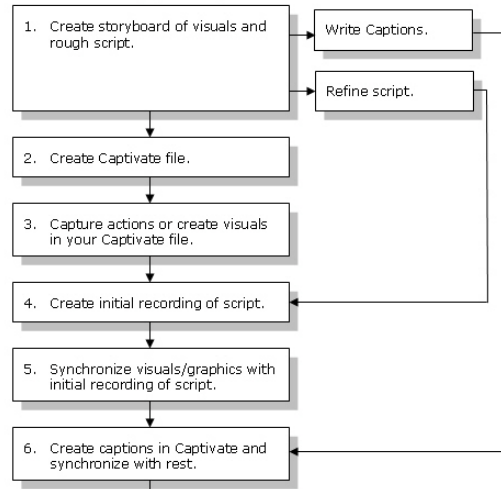
| Options | Pros | Cons |
|--|---|---|
| Your voice or voice of someone on your team | Some say non-professional voice sounds more natural. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can take longer. May not have anyone capable of good articulation or a neutral accent. |
| Professional voice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sounds more professional. Will get it done when you want it. | More expensive Hint: Call drama schools. |
| Automated voice (text-to-speech) | Good if you don't have other alternatives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can sound mechanical. |

Examples

- No audio
- Voice from our team
- Professional voice

Production Workflow

For voiceovers after you've captured rest of project



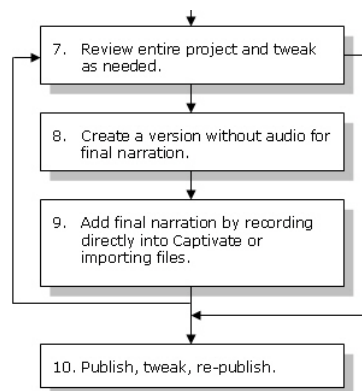
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Slide 7

Production Workflow (cont'd)

For voiceovers after you've captured rest of project



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Slide 8

Writing Scripts: Style

- Avoid text that uses the same words over and over, e.g., bullets in menu options where each one says "setup."
- If it's not necessary to have the narrator say the names of all required fields, you can just highlight those fields.
- Put in a pause after sentences where captions follow.
- Use a more conversational tone to break up simple declarative sentences, e.g., "Remember," "Let's." Contractions are OK.
- Avoid repeating phrases, e.g., "Now you will enter the information you have received from the vendor in the "information you received from the vendor" box.
- Don't abbreviate.

Writing Scripts: Help the Narrator

- Use bold for emphasis. Don't use bold for anything else.
- If an extra pause is needed, put the word "pause" in brackets...like this [PAUSE].
- In brackets, spell out acronyms or oddly pronounced words.

Writing Scripts: When to Narrate

- Captions should appear immediately before or after the narrator says the line.
- **VERY HELPFUL HINT:** When explaining a procedure with steps and then showing how it works, include the narrative for a given step and then in the next slide, show the step **without audio**.

Writing Scripts: Tools

- Word
- PowerPoint
- Captivate

| Slide # | Slide name | Visual | Script | Captions |
|---------|----------------|---------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | Introduction | Photo of 500R | Welcome to LATO [narrator: pronounced with short "a" as in "motto"] Solutions' introduction to the 500R laser imaging system. | Introducing the 500R |
| 2 | About the 500R | Video of printer printing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's begin with the 500R, a high-performance laser imaging system designed to deliver excellent printing on custom tags, labels, and forms. • The 500R offers high-speed quality printing and flexible paper handling on continuous wide web forms. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500R Laser Imaging System (heading) • High-performance, continuous laser imaging • Excellent printing on custom tags, labels, and forms. • High-speed quality printing |

Practice

- Listen to sample project with audio.
- Write (actually edit) the script.

Recording Options

- Record the Captivate project and **THEN record the audio narration as a voice-over.**

OR

- Record the Captivate project and the narration track **at the same time.**

More Recording Options

- Will you **record directly** into your Captivate project ?
- OR
- Will you **record elsewhere** and upload?

Recording Setup

- Computer with a sound card and speakers (internal or external)
- Microphone or microphone with headphones
- Recording/editing software (not needed if recording directly into Captivate).

Preparing the Script

- Print out a clean copy of the script and have it next to you.
- OR
- Copy your script into the Notes area of your slides. That way your script will appear in the Record Audio panel.

Captivate Recording Settings

1. Click Audio.
2. Click Settings.

Important: The higher the sound quality, the larger the file size. The more you compress the sound and the lower the sampling rate, the smaller the file size and lower the quality.

More on Captivate Recording Settings

| Audio Setting | Description |
|---------------------------|---|
| Input Source | Specifies the type of device you are using to create audio. In most cases this will be Microphone. |
| Encoding Bitrate | Select the bitrate at which audio encoding must be performed. This relates to sound quality, file size, and distribution methodology. Options are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CD bitrate (128 kbps) – Highest quality in Captivate options. • Near CD bitrate (96 kbps) – Default option. • FM Radio bitrate (64 kbps) – FM radio quality. • Custom – You can select your own. Note that if a user is likely to access the project by using a dial-up modem, use a higher compression/lower sampling rate, such as 56 kbps. |
| Encoding Frequency | Select the frequency at which audio encoding must be performed. Note that the higher the encoding frequency, the clearer the sound. Options are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 44.100 KHz (Default) • 22.050 KHz • 11.025 KHz |
| Encoding Speed | Drag the slider bar to set the required audio encoding speed. Increasing the encoding speed reduces the quality of the encoded files. |
| Calibrate input | Click to display the Calibrate microphone dialog box. It is important to calibrate your recording device for optimal sound. |

Recording Tips

- Rehearse the script several times before beginning.
- Get close to the microphone (within 4 to 6 inches), so any other nearby sounds have less chance of being recorded.
- Don't speak down toward the microphone; instead, position it above your nose and pointed down toward your mouth.
- Position the microphone slightly to the side of your mouth, because this can help soften the sound of the letters S and P.
- If you plan to record over several days, try to record at the same time each day.
- Before you begin, eat something so your stomach doesn't growl.
- Make sure to have a glass of water nearby so you can avoid "dry mouth."

Recording

How to record AFTER you have captured or created the project:

1. Open your Captivate project.
2. Select a slide.
3. From the **Audio** drop-down menu, select **Record**.
4. Select from the following recording options:
 - ▶ This Slide
 - ▶ Project
 - ▶ From this Slide
 - ▶ Without Preview
5. If you added your script into the Notes area of the slide, the script text appears in the box below when you click the Notes tab.

Recording (cont'd)

6. Click the **Record** button. The Calibrate audio input dialog box opens:



7. When you speak into the microphone, Captivate automatically analyzes and sets the microphone's optimal recording input level.
8. When the dialog displays **Input Level OK**, click the **OK** button and begin the narration.

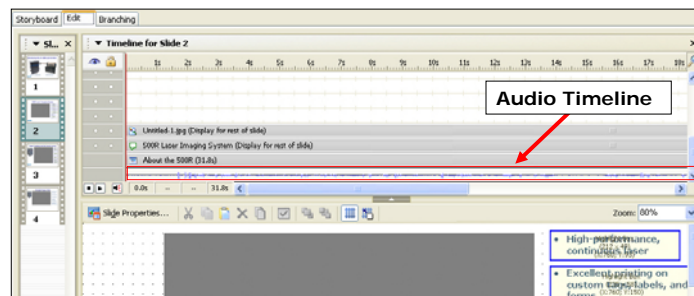
Recording (cont'd)

9. Click the **Stop Audio** button to stop recording.
10. Click the **OK** button when you are finished to save the recording.
11. Return to the slide and click **Preview** and select the correct option (Play this Slide, Project, etc.) to listen to the audio and note any problems with audio.

Note: You will most likely need to re-adjust timings on your objects to sync them with the audio OR you will need to edit the audio.

Recording Results

12. After you record audio, the audio track appears automatically in the last timeline in the slide.
13. To see the audio timeline, click the **Splitter bar**. When the timeline appears, scroll to the bottom to see the audio timeline.

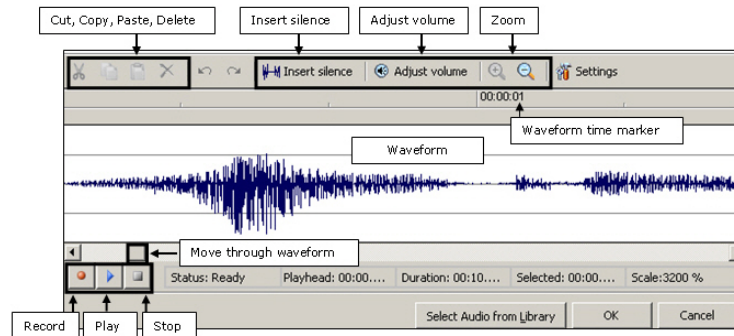


Practice

- Record your script.

Editing an Audio File in Captivate

- After you have recorded your narration, you can edit the audio file wave form.
- To view a close-up of a wave form, double-click in the audio track time line.



Editing an Audio File in Captivate (cont'd)

| Audio Editing Options | Procedure |
|---|--|
| Zoom in on a particular area of the waveform | Click on the waveform and choose the zoom in or zoom out icon. |
| Cut or copy and paste audio | Select a section of audio file directly on the waveform, click Cut or Copy . To paste, click on a different location on the waveform and select Paste . |
| Delete sections of audio | Select a section of an audio file directly on the waveform and click Delete . |
| Insert a silent period within an audio file | Click on the waveform at the location where you want the silent period to begin. Select Insert Silence . |
| Change how audio files are distributed across slides | Move to the correct position in waveform and click Start New Slide . |
| Adjust the sound level of audio files | Click Adjust volume . Use the slider bar to increase or decrease volume and select audio processing options. |
| Add a new audio file | Click on a location within the waveform, click Select Audio from library , navigate to a file, and click Open . The audio file is imported directly into the your project at the specified location. |

Cutting Out Sections of the Audio File

1. In the Edit view, select the slide that you want to edit.
2. Open the **Edit Audio** dialog box and double-click the waveform in the slide timeline.
3. In the **Edit Audio** dialog box, click the blue **forward arrow** to play the audio. Click the **pause** button to pause the audio at the point at which you want to cut.
4. Highlight the area you want to delete.
5. To verify that this is the correct part of the audio for deletion, right-click the highlighted area and choose **Play**.
6. If this is OK, right-click on the highlighted area and click the **Cut** icon (scissors) from the top of the Edit Audio dialog box.

Pasting in the Audio File

To cut audio and then paste within the same audio track or the entire project, do the following:

1. Follow the directions above for cutting.
 2. In the Edit Audio dialog box, find the section of the audio file where you want to paste the audio clip and click to insert the blinking cursor.
 3. Select the **Paste icon** (clipboard). The pasted audio clip will be inserted in the audio timeline after the blinking cursor.
- Note: If you are pasting audio into a different slide, when you click **Edit Timing**, select **Project** rather than **Slide**.

Adding Silence to an Audio File

Adding silence is particularly useful if you have imported an audio file and need to synchronize the audio with the timing of the slides. By adding silence, you can make the existing audio file work without having to edit the audio extensively.

1. Select a slide that contains an audio file. (In Storyboard view, slides containing an audio file display the audio icon beneath the slide.)
2. Select Audio > Edit Timing > Slide or Project depending on your preference.
3. Click on the waveform at the exact location where you want to add the silence.

Note: To add a silent period at a specific location in the waveform, for example four seconds into the audio file, click the waveform until the Play head information box displays a number close to four seconds (that is, 00:04.00).

Adding Silence to an Audio File (cont'd)

4. Click Insert Silence.
5. In the Insert box, type a number to specify the number of seconds for the silent period.
6. In the drop-down menu, select the location for the silent period. The choices are Play head position, Start of audio, or End of audio.
7. Click OK. The silent period is added to the audio file, and you can see the silent period in the waveform. The audio file with added silence is saved under a new file name.

To test the audio file with the silent period added, click the Play button.

Practice

- Edit the audio in your project.

Using Prerecorded Audio Files

- Import files to the audio library (good if you have a lot of files).

OR

- Import a file directly to a slide.

Importing into Library

1. Open your Captivate project in the Edit view.
2. Open the library pane – from the View drop-down menu, select Show Library and click the import icon.
3. Navigate to the audio files that you previously saved to your hard drive.
4. Select the files (hold the shift key to select a group of files) and choose Open.
5. Once the files are imported to the audio library, open the slide in which you want an audio file to play.
6. From the audio library, select the audio file and drag it to the slide. Important Note: Be sure you drag the audio file onto the slide's background - not onto any of the objects on the slide.
7. To check that the correct audio file is attached to the slide, while you are on the slide in Edit mode, click Slide Properties and then the Audio tab. This shows you the name of the audio file.

Importing into One Slide

1. Open your Captivate project in the Edit view.
2. Open the slide on which you want the audio to begin playing.
3. Select the **Audio** drop-down from the main menu and choose **Import**.
4. Browse the desktop to find the audio file.
5. Click **Open**.

Note: The file you import to the slide is automatically added to the audio library as well.

Prerecording Tips

- Create an .exe file of the Captivate project for the narrator to watch while the script is being recorded externally.
- Compare the recorded audio against the video to make sure they're about the same length before uploading.
- To make your audio files easier to find, name them before they are imported. Or in Captivate, you can rename each file by right-clicking on the audio file in the library and choosing **Rename**.

Publishing

- Before publishing, delete unused audio files in the library.
- Publish as usual (File>Publish and then select Standalone, Flash, etc).
- Note that you don't need the audio files – they are embedded within the Captivate project.

Practice

- Publish your project as an .exe and review.