



Quick Start Guide



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Introduction

Welcome to AutoMotion from Digital Heaven, the first graphics workflow management software for Apple's Motion and Final Cut Pro.

AutoMotion is such a revolution because it automates what used to be a very tedious and manual process. Simply import graphic templates and text data and let AutoMotion create new Motion projects in seconds. These can be imported into Final Cut Pro and placed on the timeline as required.

But it doesn't stop there. AutoMotion handles the updating and editing of Motion projects even after they've been placed on an FCP timeline and this is where the true power of AutoMotion really shines.

This Quick Start Guide is written as an introduction to the benefits of using AutoMotion. Please note that if you are running the demo version then a maximum of five versions can be created and exported.

Installing AutoMotion

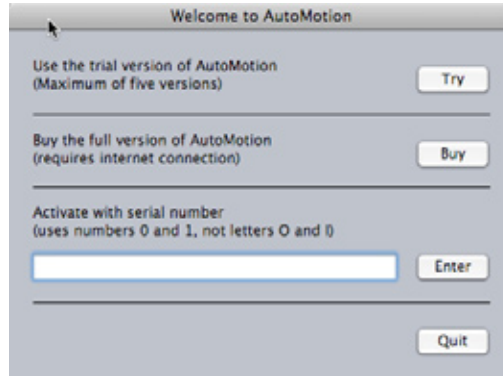
AutoMotion is downloaded as a compressed zip file. If the file has not unzipped automatically then double-click it. Move the AutoMotion application file to the Applications folder on your system.

AutoMotion's preview feature requires Motion 2.01 (or later) to be installed in the system's Applications folder. If Motion 2.01 (or later) is not found when AutoMotion launches then the Viewer will be disabled.

Getting Started

Double click the AutoMotion icon to start the application.

If AutoMotion is launched in trial mode, you will see the following screen:



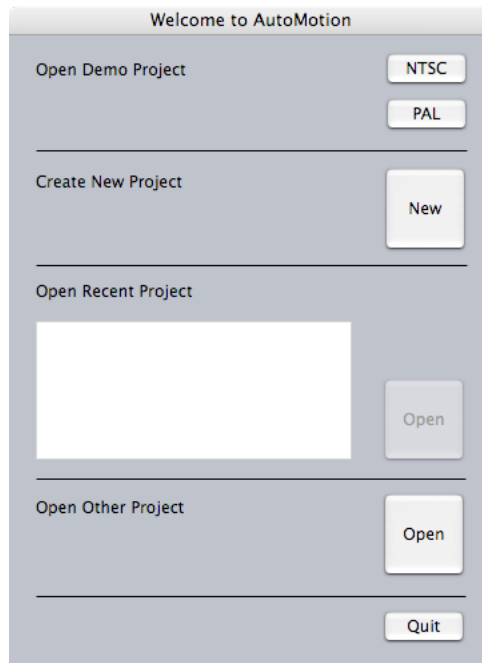
If you have already purchased the software then enter the serial number or paste it from your order confirmation email. There will be a few seconds delay whilst AutoMotion checks with the servers to activate the serial number.

If your computer has an internet connection, you can buy the full version directly from within AutoMotion. Simply click the Buy button and follow the onscreen instructions. When the purchase is confirmed, your serial number will be automatically entered and the full version activated.



Alternatively to use AutoMotion in trial mode, click the Try button.

After the About screen is shown, the AutoMotion welcome window opens:



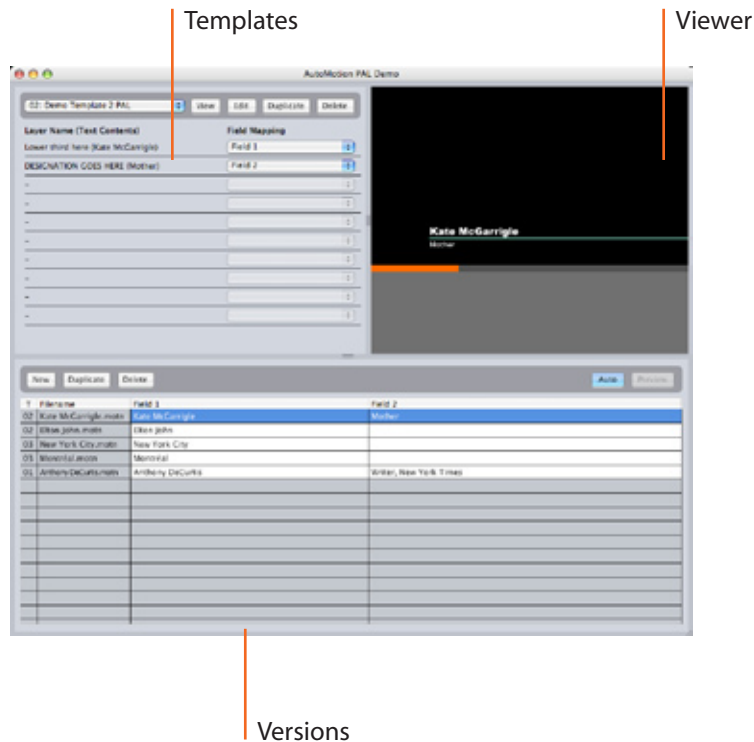
For the purposes of this quick start guide we will be using the demo projects included with AutoMotion. Click on the NTSC or PAL button as desired.

NOTE: The Demo Project buttons are only displayed if AutoMotion is running in trial mode.

The demo project will open and the AutoMotion window will be displayed.

The AutoMotion Interface

The AutoMotion interface is split into three panels which can be freely resized, in a similar manner to Motion's interface:



A template is defined as a Motion project (.motn) which has been imported. Up to 99 templates can be imported into an AutoMotion project with up to 10 text objects in each template.

A version is defined as a separate graphic that you want to export. Each row in the version area represents a separate version and each column represents a field of data within that version. Each version is linked to a template so AutoMotion knows which template to use for a particular version.

Selecting Versions

Select a version by clicking on either the first or second column which currently have a grey background. Selecting a version this way ensures there is no possibility of accidentally changing the text contents.

Select a few different versions (or use the up and down keys to move between them) and notice how the Viewer automatically updates with the preview of the selected version.

In this demo project, there are three graphics for interviewee names and two full-frame graphics for city names.

Auto Preview

If Auto Preview is enabled, the Viewer will automatically update as new versions are selected or any changes are made to the current version. The orange bar underneath the viewer indicates the current position within the version. Drag on this area to scrub the entire length of the version or move the mouse onto the Viewer and drag left and right to jog through frame by frame.

The Viewer has safe area overlays which can be shown or hidden by pressing Cmd-/ or choosing View > Show Safe Areas. There are also comprehensive options for 16:9 safe areas available in the View menu.

Depending on the complexity of the templates and the speed of your system, you may find it beneficial to disable Auto Preview when editing text.

Disable Auto Preview by clicking on the Auto button (or press A) and the Viewer will show an "Auto Preview Disabled" message.

With Auto Preview disabled, you can manually update the viewer at any time simply by clicking on the Preview button (or by pressing P). The screen will return to the "Auto Preview Disabled" if the current preview is no longer valid - for instance if you select a different version.

Enable Auto Preview again.

Editing Text

Let's edit the text contents of a version:

- Select the Elton John version
- Click on the cell in the Field 2 column to edit it
- When the text cursor is visible, type in "Singer & Songwriter" then press the return or enter key
- If Auto Preview is enabled, the Viewer will automatically update to show the change made to the text contents of the current version

If multiple versions are selected (either continuous selection made by holding down the Shift key or non-continuous selection made by holding down the Command key) then the Viewer will show a "Multiple Versions Selected" message. When the selection returns to a single version then the message disappears and the regular preview is shown.

Assigning Templates

Up to 99 templates can be imported into an AutoMotion project and the first column in the versions area indicates which template is assigned to each version. In the demo project, there are three templates and you will notice that the interviewee names such as Kate McGarrigle and Elton John have been assigned to template 02. Apart from the last name, Anthony DeCurtis who is assigned to template 01.

Let's fix that. Select the Anthony DeCurtis version and you'll notice the popup menu at the top left of the templates area updates to '01: Demo template 1'.

Now change the popup menu to Demo template 2 instead and correspondingly the 01 in the version list will change to 02. If you have Auto Preview enabled, you will also see the Viewer update with the new template.

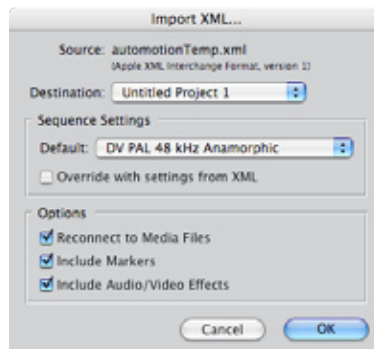
Exporting Versions

Let's export all the versions to Final Cut Pro. If it isn't already running, launch Final Cut Pro and create a new project.

We'll use a handy feature in AutoMotion called Smart Export, which exports only the versions which a) haven't yet been exported or b) have been changed since the last export.

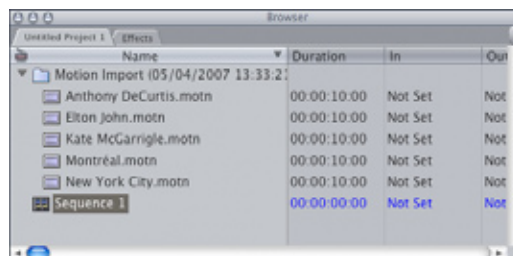
Press Cmd-E or choose File > Export > Smart.

Final Cut Pro is made active and an "Import XML" dialogue displayed.



Select the desired project in the "Destination" menu and click OK.

The versions exported from AutoMotion will appear as a new timestamped bin in Final Cut Pro.

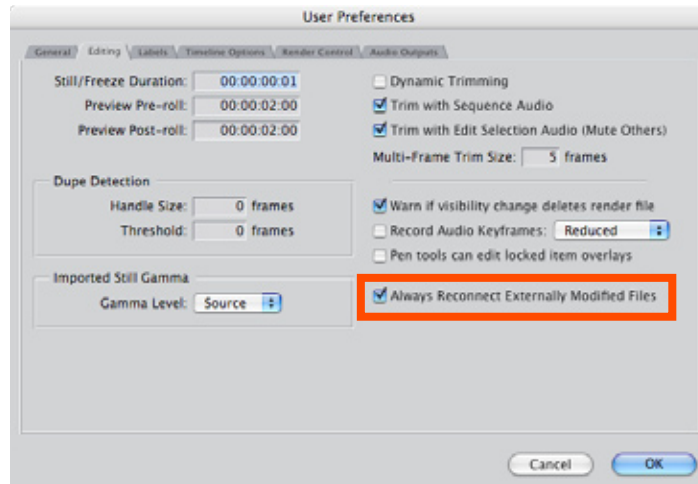


Create a new sequence (DV codec, anamorphic, PAL or NTSC as desired) and drag all the AutoMotion files into the sequence so they are back-to-back clips.

Managing Versions

Now if that wasn't enough, let's take things to the next level and see the true power of AutoMotion.

First, confirm that Final Cut Pro is set to automatically update imported files. Choose User Preferences and select the Editing tab.



"Always Reconnect Externally Modified Files" should be checked.

Let's imagine that we want to change the colour of the top line of text on template 02 which has been used in all the interviewee name versions. Usually this would involve opening up each clip in Motion, selecting the text object, changing its colour and then resaving to the same file. Hold on tight...AutoMotion does all this automatically!

Switch back to AutoMotion and notice how the first two columns of every version is green indicating that the exported file matches with the current state of that version.

Select the Kate McGarrigle version. The popup menu at the top left of the templates area will update to show "02 Demo Template 2". Click the Edit button to the right of this popup menu.

Motion will launch (if it isn't running already) and the original template project will be opened.

NOTE: These Demo Projects were created in Motion 2. If you are working with Motion 3 or later, then you'll see a message when opening the template. Be sure to click the "Open Original" button so the original file is updated when saved.

Now change the colour of the top line of text from yellow to blue and save the file.

Switch back to AutoMotion. It automatically recognises that the template has been edited and instantly reimports the new template. In a couple of seconds you'll see the preview of the current version with the updated template...and the first line is now blue for all interviewees!

You may also notice that in the versions area, the first two columns (previously green) have now changed to orange for any version using template 03. This indicates that the version has been changed in some way and will need to be exported again.

With Smart Export this bit is easy - just press Cmd-E or choose File > Export > Smart and only the orange (now invalid) versions will be exported and turn green again.

Switch back to Final Cut Pro and in a couple of seconds, the Motion files in the Browser and sequence will update. With AutoMotion, style changes are easier and quicker than ever.

Summary

That concludes this Quick Start Guide for AutoMotion. We hope it has given you a flavour of how powerful and flexible AutoMotion is.

See the user manual for more comprehensive details on AutoMotion features..