Appendix IV - Codec Reference

Introduction

QuickTime Codecs are used for compressing visual media within LiveStage Professional. The codec tells QuickTime how the particular visual object is to be compressed in the movie.

Codec Descriptions

The codecs included in LiveStage Professional are described below, however you may wish to try out the "Codec Demo" sample movie included in the "Features Demos" folder. Playing with this sample movie will provide you with a better understanding of how each of the codecs operate.

Don't Recompress	No additional compression is done on the image data. It is used exactly as provided and incorporated into the movie. Use this if your image is already compressed well or if it is a vector graphic.
Graphics	Best for digital and other related images. This compressor provides very good compression with no loss in image quality. It is almost half the data-rate of the Animation codec.
Animation	Specifically designed to handle animated content like cartoon graphics, still screen captures and graphic images with solid color. This can provide very high levels of compression for this kind of content, but is not appropriate for photo type

graphics like JPEG images, analog video or 3D animation. This codec is lossless at the best quality setting, suitable for CD-ROM delivery at lower quality settings and has good temporal compression

Animation + Alpha	Similar to Animation but this codec is also used when you wish to use a transparent color for the image as the other codecs do not support transparency.
JPEG	Standard JPEG style compression which is good for photographs or similar images. Can compress to very small images but there is a sacrifice in image quality.
Sorenson	High quality compressor similar to JPEG but creates smaller files. The Sorenson compressor is known to create unusual visual side effects when used for sprites whose matrices are being manipulated extensively.
Cinepak	High quality compressor for video which can do 10:1 compression. Similar to Sorenson but does not look nearly as good.
Video	Fast encoder/decoder for video compression.
Motion JPeg A & B	Used for compressing photos. These compressors have Photo JPEG plus field support, are common in many non-linear editing systems, can be broadcast quality at higher data rates and are good for archiving slide shows. These compressors do not have temporal compression, the grayscale is only 8-bit and every frame is a key frame.
H251	Used for compression of video. This compressor has a faster decoder than H263, has good temporal compression and works best with low motion. This compressor is weaker than H263, not good on a modem connection and is CPU intensive.

H263	Used for compression of video. This compressor is good for video conferencing, is better with high-motion at modem speeds, has a fast encoder and has better image quality than H261. This compressor has a slow decoder, works best at multiples of 16 and is CPU intensive.
PNG	Perfect compressor for images with an alpha-channel.

There are other Codecs that you may also specify but they are not for image compression. These Codecs allow you to create certain effects like fire within the image.

Ripple	Generates a ripple effect like that of a rock being thrown into a pool of water. It should be noted that sprites that utilize the ripple codec only affect sprites in the Sprite Track. You must also ensure that the sprite using the ripple codec is on a layer above the sprites that it is to ripple. Changing the OpColor used with the Ripple Codec will affect the amount of ripple used for each color component.
Fire	A fire effect which you can use with alpha blending to create some spectacular effects.
Cloud	Produces cloud effects for use in your movie.

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