

Frameserving to MEP

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Introduction

Back in the early days of Movie Edit Pro, it was found that it couldn't handle many types of file, including MPEGs, VOBs and other AVIs. This drove us all to distraction. Richard, who's business IS video, worked out how to use Virtual Dub to get MEP to open all the types of files it could not do itself.

Why Frameserve? Early versions of MEP had problems with some types of files and either could not open them or couldn't keep the audio in sync (these problems do not occur with DV-AVI files from, for example, DV cameras). While each version gets better and better at opening the myriad formats of video files, there are times when it can't hack it.

While most of these files can be converted to DV-AVI (and so curing the audio sync issue) using Virtual Dub this is a time-consuming process, as well as using lots of hard drive space and reducing video quality slightly. Frameserving provides an efficient method of editing the video in MEP without intermediate format changes as well as allowing much faster response on the timeline.

The other major advantage of using Virtual Dub is that you can apply effects to the original file using either Virtual Dub's filters, or AVISYNTH before it is processed by MEP, cutting out an encoding step. From MEP 11 on, MEP will open quite a few Virtual Dub filters but not all, so frameserving gives you access to those.

Frameserving means sending the original video (MPEG files and other .AVI formats) frame by frame to MEP without converting it into another format first. In other words, MEP thinks it is “seeing” the original video, but it is actually seeing a version converted on the fly by Virtual Dub. In effect, Virtual Dub “serves” each frame to MEP. So, for all intents and purposes, MEP is editing the original.

The audio component of the MPEG file is saved separately, and then added to the MEP timeline by you (only once). So the video comes in via frameserving. The two are then lined up, grouped if necessary, and you have perfect audio sync.

Frameserving can also be used to “serve” files processed by VirtualDub using AVISynth (which can be used to apply all sorts of filters to video).

This guide covers only the basics of frameserving from Virtual Dub. Please see Richard's posts on the MEP Forum for details on using AVISynth and VirtualDub for more sophisticated video processing and frameserving to MEP.

Installation of VirtualDub

1. Download [VirtualDub](#) and unzip it into any desired folder, then create a shortcut to the Virtualdub.exe file. Put the shortcut wherever you like eg on the Desktop.
2. In the Virtual Dub folder created above, double-click Auxsetup.exe.
3. Click on Install Handler, then OK, OK, then Exit.
4. If you're trying to edit an MPEG 2 or WMV that MEP cannot open properly, download the appropriate plugin from [FCC Handlers home page](#), unzip it and follow the instructions in the Readme.txt file for installing the plugin.

Frameserving with Virtual Dub

Note: The frameserving must be set up before MEP is opened.

Start Virtual Dub via the shortcut you created above, or by double-clicking the virtualdub.exe file in the Virtual Dub folder.

1. Click File, Open and then open the file you want to frameserve to MEP. Wait for the file to load into Vdub.
2. Click File, Save WAV...

Insert a suitable name for the wave file (this is the audio component/sound track of the file you will frameserve to MEP) and nominate a suitable folder eg your MEP project folder.

3. Click OK to save the wav file: the audio will be extracted and saved in .wav format. Wait for the audio to be extracted.
4. Optionally, click File, Preview Output From Start to preview the video file.
5. Click Video, Direct Stream Copy.
6. Click File, Start Frame Server... A small "Frameserver Setup" dialog will appear.
7. Click Start. A File Save dialog will appear named "Save .VDR signpost for AVIFile handler".
8. Then, in the folder of your choice eg your MEP "Recordings" (Y) folder, enter the name of the file you are going to "serve" to and click Save. It is suggested that it be made the same as the WAV file above. The file name must be as follows:

"myvideo.vdr.avi" - note the two extensions!

- Even if the original file is an MPEG file, name the frameserve file ".vdr.avi". The "AVI" is required at the end so that MEP will recognise the file and import it.
- "myvideo" can be substituted with any suitable name.

Notes:

- You will now have a small box which, at the top, says Frame Serving Mode. Don't close this box. Virtual Dub itself will close.
 - If you have more than one MPEG to bring in to MEP, no problem! Just frameserve the other MPEGs as described above. Richard has used dozens at once.
9. Start MEP, open or create a new project as required, then browse to the myvideo.vdr.avi file you saved in step 10, and drag it to the timeline. If it is a 16:9 file, you may have to right-click on the video, select Object Properties and then change the Ratio to 16:9.
 10. Drag the wav file to the timeline.
 11. Make sure both tracks are at the zero point (so they line up), and there you have your in-sync file for editing!

To work on the same files later in another session, start the frame server as above: you don't need to save the audio again (make sure you use the same file names for the .vdr.avi files). Then open your MEP project.