VERSION 8.0.1.XXX - DEVELOPED BY: AVOLITES MEDIA LTD. POWERED BY: SALVATION (TM) HARRISON DIGITAL MEDIA INC. DRIVEN BY: DAVE GREEN, TREY HARRISON, STEVE WARREN, J.B, CIARAN ABRAMS, SELVIN COOPER, ARRAN ROTHWELL-EYRE, SIMON GRAHAM, MARY, PRADS, GREG, ADAM, OLIE, ALL AT AVOLITES AND YOU. SPECIAL THANKS MARK CALVERT. LETS ROCK!

System Settings

VERSION 8.X

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with Additions by Dave Green & Ciaran Abrams

System Settings

Configure your system
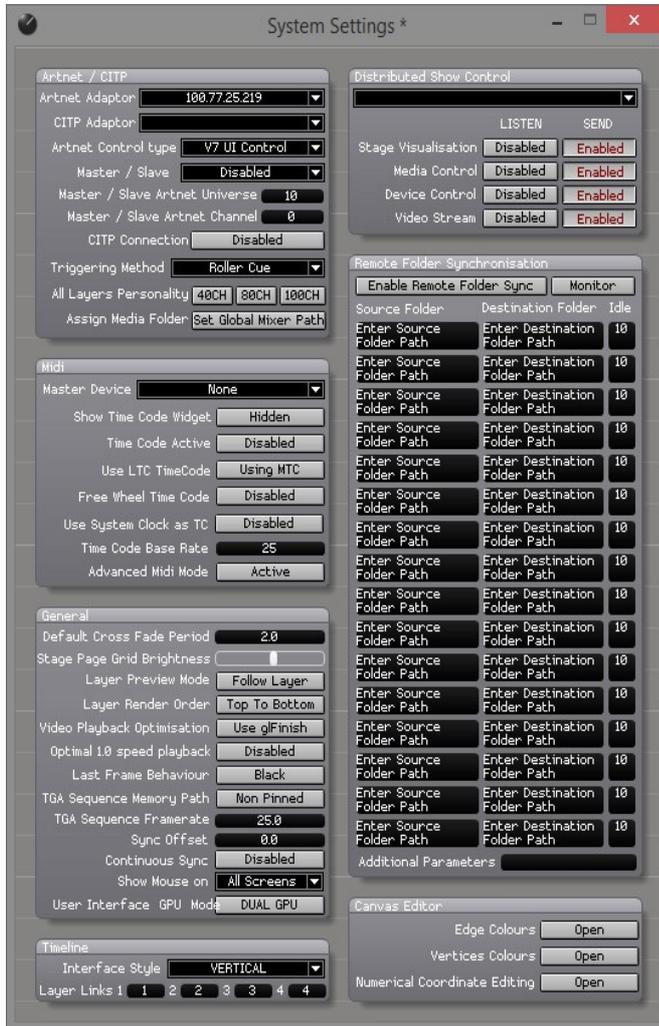
The system settings window in Ai allows you access to many of the underlying settings which don't need to be controlled during a live show but may need to be setup differently for each project.

When we open the system settings window, we can see that its split up into 7 main sections.

The first set of options relate to ArtNet control and allow us to set an ArtNet and CITP adaptor separately, specify the ArtNet control type (the v6 profiles are for backwards compatibility, all modern projects will use v7 control), choose whether the current machine runs as master or slave and then set the universe and channel to transmit and receive master / slave control data. The initialise button is used at the appropriate time when first connecting your Ai server system to a lighting console allowing for the requisite data to be shared via the CITP protocol. The triggering method determines whether media is selected and triggered from the Ai interface or via the file and folder system used on many lighting consoles. The three personality options are set as a system wide option depending on the level of control you require for your layers and show. When using the file and folder

triggering method it is possible to specify an alternative folder instead of the media folder by locating your chosen destination using the set global mixer path button.

The second section of options relates to MIDI and MIDI time code. The drop down menu allows you to select your master midi device for midi control input or MIDI time code input. Then we have several buttons which appertain to MIDI time code specifically – the first button reveals the time code widget in the main interface. This widget has numerical values below it to show the current frame and any offset that has been applied to the timing. Inside the widget there are a series of 4 bands - each of which related to frames, seconds, minutes and hours – which fill up as time progresses. Next we have the Time code Active button which activates the widget (red is inactive, blue is active). An alternative way to activate the widget is to click on the widget itself once it is exposed within the main interface. If your machine has an LTC port (as found on the Infinity 8 and EX models) then pressing the Use LTC button makes your system listen to that port regardless of the one specified in the drop down.

Enabling or disabling Freewheel time code gives you two methods for the clips to synchronise with Time code. When enabled, time code serves purely as a trigger for the media – once a certain time is reached the clip is triggered and will play on regardless of the time code. When this option is disabled, the clip will listen for time code at all times and will only play as long as time code is being received – if the time code stops, so does the playback. Both of these approaches have pros and cons depending on the environment you wish to use them in. the option to use the system clock as the time code generator can be very useful in a situation where you wish to have timed events, but a time code generator is not available or appropriate to run a show. For instance in a bar you might always know that at 8pm you want to advertise drinks offers and can therefore just use the system clock regardless of the time it is started instead of making sure your time code generator starts at the same time each day. The time code base rate needs to be set at the same value as that which is being received in the time code – a mismatch can result in missed triggers and unexpected behaviour.

For more information on using time code in Ai please see the Time Code Tutorial

The general section is focussed more on how the system works. The default cross fade period is the value used by all clips when fading on the layer unless an alternative value has been set for that clip in the right click properties and the Stage Page Grid brightness allows you to adjust the visibility of the background grid in the stage construction page. Layer preview mode either enables an always on preview in the layer preview, regardless of the intensity value of the layer – it is worth remembering that having this active will use a little more system power as AI will always be rendering those outputs. Layer Render Order lets you choose whether the top layer in your stack is shown above or below the following layers – this is to make the working order more familiar to people used to working from the bottom up instead of from the top down. The Use GI Finish option will alter the way Open GL is rendered, and in some situations can give a noticeable performance improvement when selected. Optimal 1.0 speed playback changes the way video playback clocks are calculated to trust output monitor refresh rate when clip speed equals 1.0, or to use the system clock as the trusted clock source. Last frame behaviour has two options, black and hold last frame, which allow you to choose how the last frame is held when using a relevant playback mode.

TGA Sequence Memory Path is a useful option when using TGA image sequences – it determines whether Ai uses a section of GPU memory to store the sequence, which can

improve efficiency when using a compatible AMD card. The next two options relate to using TGA image sequences in Ai – TGA Sequence Memory Path...... and TGA Sequence Frame rate allows you to specify how many of these frames are played back per second.

Sync offset and continuous sync are two options for files which contain audio as well as video. When enabled, continuous sync allows the system to adjust the video forwards or backwards to maintain synchronisation with the clock in the embedded audio stream. Sync Offset sets an offset between the Audio playback and the video playback to allow for any delay between audio playback and video playback. The Show Mouse On option allows the user to select which screens the mouse should be shown on. And finally the User Interface GPU Mode allows you to block textures which are currently being sent to the 2nd GPU from being shown in the main UI window. This can offer significant performance improvements, in projects where large textures are being sent to outputs 4-8 (on the 2nd GPU), with the compromise of having the UI window not show the textures routed to the 2nd GPU. This option basically reduces the amount of data being transferred around the PCIe bus to the minimum required to service the systems outputs appropriately.

The timeline box only has a couple of options here – the first allows us to choose either a horizontal or vertical layout for the timeline to suit the approach that you prefer and the second section allows you to assign the allocated layers programmed within a timeline, routing them to the appropriate layers within your mixer. The number shown in the box is the layer that will playback the respective channel from the timeline – this can be really useful if you have programmed a complicated timeline but still need to manually override or busk a section of your show.

The Distributed Show Control section gives you full control over which parameters and visualiser components are shared between machines making use of the Virtual Network Fixture function, whether they are being sent or received and also gives you options to choose the network adaptor in use as well entering security passwords to make sure that only approved machines can share and receive.

The remote folder synchronisation section is to allocate and setup up to sixteen source and destination folders and when activated can look for media which is either present or missing from these folders and distribute the content accordingly.

The last set of options in the system settings panel are for Canvas Editor control, allowing you to alter the colours used for edges and vertices as well as a control panel to allow you to alter your canvas properties numerically instead of by using the mouse as you usually would.