Camtasia Studio 8 – Advanced Editing and Publishing Techniques

Take your Camtasia Studio videos to the next level with expert tips and advanced features

Claire Broadley
Mathew Dixon

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Since the launch of the company, Red Robot Media has provided essential technical writing services to companies around the world. This includes private and public sector clients in the UK, US-based software companies, and Japanese hi-tech manufacturers.

Thanks to all at Packt Publishing.

In memory of Daisy.
About the Reviewers

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He takes pride in generating documentation to spec and on time with minimal impact on staff time. As he would say, 'I get a kick out of exceeding client/employer expectations, and have got that kick many times'.

Bill has a decades-long track record of success in the area of end user, technical training, and course development; the technical courses were richly informed by his stints as a developer, a great way to generate real-life war stories.

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He enjoys interviewing people as a hobby, but would be happy to do so for money.
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Camtasia Studio 8 – Advanced Editing and Publishing Techniques is an immensely powerful video editing tool. It’s incredibly easy to get grips with this tool, and anyone can create a basic screencast video in a matter of minutes.

In time, many Camtasia Studio users begin to investigate the advanced features in the software with the aim of achieving a more professional result. This book is intended to be a guide for the intermediate users, who are ready to improve their skills.

We will look at the settings and features, follow step-by-step guides, and consider practical time-saving tips.

What this book covers
Chapter 1, Obtaining Quality Source Material, explains how we can obtain the best quality source material for our video. We also discuss about planning a Camtasia Studio project and look at the appropriate settings for the final output.

Chapter 2, Working with Audio, deals with creating or sourcing audio. We also cover audio editing, formatting, and publishing settings.

Chapter 3, Enhancing, Editing, and Drawing the Eye, covers a variety of ways to enhance a Camtasia Studio video. We also look at ways to apply these enhancements effectively.

Chapter 4, Creating More Complex Video Sequences, covers some of the more advanced features in Camtasia Studio.

Chapter 5, Publishing Tips and Techniques, covers various ways to publish videos and their pros and cons.
What you need for this book
To follow the examples given in the book, the following software are required:

- Operating system: Windows 7 or above
- Software: Camtasia Studio 8.1 or above

While some of the examples are applicable to older versions of Camtasia Studio or Camtasia for Mac, not all of the functionalities are supported.

Who this book is for
This book is intended to be a guide for Camtasia Studio users who have grasped the basics of the software and are looking to refine their video using more advanced techniques.

Conventions
In this book, you will find a number of styles of text that distinguish between different kinds of information. Here are some examples of these styles, and an explanation of their meaning.

Code words in text, database table names, folder names, filenames, file extensions, path names, dummy URLs, user input, and Twitter handles are shown as follows: "The recording is saved as a .camrec file."

New terms and important words are shown in bold. Words that you see on the screen, in menus or dialog boxes for example, appear in the text like this: "Navigate to View | Project | Editing Dimensions to adjust the editing dimensions for the project."

Warnings or important notes appear in a box like this.

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Preface

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Questions

You can contact us at questions@packtpub.com if you are having a problem with any aspect of the book, and we will do our best to address it.
Camtasia is capable of producing extremely professional video output. But to achieve professional results, it is essential that we start with good quality source material.

A little time spent on the basics will make life far easier as the project progresses, and it will ensure a far better result with fewer snags along the way.

In this chapter, we will look at how we can prepare ourselves for recording, how we record the screen, how to record with the webcam, and how to obtain quality material. We will also discuss how to record using separate devices and look at how the recordings will be imported into Camtasia.

To begin with, let's look at preparation.

**Preparing for a recording**

Before we capture the first video, we must ask a few key questions about our project as a whole:

- Who will view it?
- Where will it be distributed?
- What format will it be exported in?
- What size and resolution do I need to use?
- Will I be using effects such as zoom and pan?
- What will be the canvas color for our video?
- Will we be using audio, onscreen text, or both?
- What visual branding will be used?
As we proceed through this book, we will discuss these questions in more detail.

Some videos need more preparation than others but, regardless of the purpose, we must take basic steps to ensure that our video is of high quality and suitable for the intended output format at the bare minimum.

**Choosing the right dimensions**

There are three types of video dimensions that we will use to create our video:

- Production dimensions
- Editing dimensions
- Recording dimensions

The production dimensions that we choose will largely depend on where the final video will be viewed. We select the production dimensions when we produce and publish the video, but we should be able to decide what they will be before we start recording.

Consider the following possible scenarios:

- Suppose we are developing a video to be viewed by work colleagues only. This means that we will select only the resolution suitable for the monitors at our workplace.
- If we're developing a video for to be viewed on mobile devices, it is easier to work with the output device in mind, rather than trying to adapt a finished video to fit into a different screen size.

What if the video will be viewed on different devices? The solution is simple: we should use the highest resolution we'll need. That's because scaling the video down is far easier than scaling it up.

The editing dimensions determine the size of the editing canvas on which we will work. In most cases, the editing dimensions will be the same as the production dimensions. However, we can decide if we want to work on a large canvas, and zoom and pan to different areas.

If we choose to use different editing and production dimensions, the editing dimensions should be larger than the production dimensions. When we produce our video from a different-sized editing canvas (or zoom and pan the region) the image will be scaled to match the production dimensions. It is far better to scale down than scaling up.
We’ll have the chance to determine the editing dimensions for the Camtasia project when we record our first screencast or add our first item to the timeline.

The editing dimensions can be adjusted after they have been set initially. Navigate to View | Project | Editing Dimensions to adjust the editing dimensions for the project.

Finally, the recording dimensions are set whenever we record the screen or with the webcam. These are shown later in this chapter.

When choosing the recording dimensions, don't forget the different types of effect we will be using. The video's resolution will be compromised when we apply a zoom and pan in Camtasia, so obtaining video at a higher resolution will help to retain the video clarity.

When we adjust the size of a video, we ideally want to maintain the aspect ratio. If we record the full screen, and if the dimensions of our monitor are different from those of the target device, we may end up with a video that is stretched and distorted, or a video that has extra canvas on display.

For example, if we are planning to output at 640 x 480, filming at 1280 x 960 will allow us to zoom in to a quarter of the visible space without risking the output quality of the footage.

We should take time to decide the acceptable levels of resolution loss, so that we can set up our filming dimensions accordingly.

It's a good idea to develop rules for our dimensions and stick to them throughout our project.

**Choosing the right frame rate**

When we're working with video, whether it is from an internal or external camera, or if we are making a screen recording, we need to take some time to consider the frame rates.

If we're matching and importing content from different sources, we need to check the frame rate of each source. The frame rate of any imported footage might influence the decision on our project frame rate as a whole.

Developing conventions at the beginning of the project will help us to achieve a better-quality result.
Obtaining Quality Source Material

The video can be edited to display at a slower clip speed, so we may be able to use mismatched frame rates to our advantage. If we aim to produce our final video with a frame rate of 24 frames per second (fps), and if a source video is filmed with a frame rate of 30 fps, the mismatch will allow us enough leeway to reduce the clip speed of the source video by 80 percent without having a noticeable effect on the quality.

Familiarizing yourself with the camera

While Camtasia is great for recording the screen, we can also use live video in our projects.

There are two ways to capture live video: using the computer's built-in webcam or using a separate camera connected to the computer with a cable.

Some computers have very good built-in cameras capable of great quality footage, and these are very convenient if you need a quick solution.

For flexibility, an external camera is more useful and produces better results, simply because it can be positioned freely.

Here are a few points to note about camera capture:

- Any modern digital camera should give us the option to record in full 1080 pixel HD, and that's a big plus when it comes to a crisp output. As we'll see in this book, a better quality capture always leads to a better result.

  Even if we're not sure about the resolution for our live video capture, it is worth recording the footage in HD. If we ever want the finished project to be of a larger size, we will have the necessary footage for a bigger resolution.

- We should make sure that we know how to use the camera before setting it up. If we spend some time becoming familiar with its settings, it's one less thing we need to learn on the fly.

- A tripod is desirable to prevent our camera from toppling over, drooping or needing to be corrected between takes. A small and inexpensive desktop tripod is fine for basic recording, particularly in a makeshift studio setup. For more accomplished recording, use an inexpensive full-sized tripod for freedom of movement and flexibility.
Preparing the studio
If we record with the webcam or an external camera, we must make sure that the space we are recording in is fully prepared. Mostly we’ll have to accept some compromises when setting up our makeshift studio, but there are things that we can do to improve the capture quality:

• We can light our studio from different angles so that there are no shadows. Most built-in cameras and consumer digital cameras require a lot of light to produce good quality results.

• We can remove the background clutter and other distractions, and we can place the camera in a convenient spot that gives us a clear view without the need for zoom. Digital zoom is a not acceptable, since it can introduce flaws and noise to the picture. But even optical zoom can be troublesome, since it's difficult to match between takes; so it’s best not to use it.

• If we wear glasses, we'll need to remove them as they reflect the light or the image on the computer screen. It may be preferable to wear contact lenses while filming so that our viewers are not distracted by this.

• When it comes to audio, we can get a far better result by investing in a decent microphone. Invest in a good USB desktop microphone that can be set up just out of shot. Alternatively, a good lapel microphone is a great investment.

Saving your project
At the beginning of the project, it makes sense to plan ahead and save your project early.

When saving a Camtasia project, we can choose how to collate material used in the project, helping us to stay organized.

Saving now also ensures that autosave is enabled. Camtasia will then back up the project every minute as we work, which avoids the frustration of having to set up the project all over again if we forget to save it later.
Obtaining Quality Source Material

Obtaining Quality Source Material

Navigate to Tools | Options to adjust the autosave settings. In the Program tab, the Autosave every checkbox can be switched on or off and the autosave frequency can be adjusted as required.

Recording the screen

Recording the screen is tricky and requires some skill and practice. This is where our resolution decisions and zooming and panning roles come into play.

Planning a screen capture

Before we start recording, we should take time to plan out the actions we are going to capture and the way we will make these actions flow.

Consider the following:

- Does the video involve multiple steps to achieve a certain result? How will we link these steps?
- In the video, will we record key presses, such as the typing of words, phrases, file names, and passwords? If so, do we know exactly what we are going to type and where?
- Will we be describing each action separately, or in one or two sentences?
- Have we created a dummy account with a false e-mail address to avoid giving away any personal data onscreen?

It doesn't hurt to run through the recording process a couple of times before capturing anything. Making notes of the most basic points can help us to plan the action effectively, which will save a huge amount of time at the editing stage. If we are adding a voice narration to the video, a carefully planned script will be helpful. We will discuss scripting in detail later in this chapter.
Any notes that we make will also aid in scripting any voice-over we are planning to record.

It's always tempting to record more than one stream at once (such as voice and capture, or video and capture). With practice, this can save time; however, the quality is often better when we focus on each element separately.

The best practice for screen captures

To obtain the best source material from capture, there are a number of simple rules that we can follow:

- We should set the recording dimensions according to the rules we have made.

- If we plan to zoom in to parts of this recording, we should record at a larger dimension.

- After setting the desired capture size, we can resize the application windows we plan to record, so that they will fit into the recording area. This means we do not need to crop the video later.

- We may decide to include other effects such as textboxes. We can take time to plan ahead. We can check whether there is enough space within the recording area to fit extra annotations into the shot? If not, we may have to increase the recording dimensions to allow us to shrink the video and make room for these effects on the canvas.

- Camtasia will capture the mouse pointer in a screen recording, so we should consider how we can use our mouse during the recording. We can actively minimize the mouse movements so we don't distract our viewer from the important action on screen.

- We can move the mouse pointer in deliberate and smooth strokes, pausing where we want to cut the video or extend the frames to give the voice over time to catch up.
How to record the screen

Recording the screen in Camtasia Studio is very simple. In this section, we will record a basic screen capture on our Windows PC. We can quickly produce a screen grab at the beginning of a project. This is a useful method for testing the resolution dimensions and frame rates we are intending to use in the output. Perform the following steps:

1. Navigate to **Tools | Record the screen**. The screen capture window is displayed alongside the recording area, as shown in the following screenshot. Here, we can choose the options we are going to use for this recording.
2. Navigate to **Tools | Options** to access a number of useful settings that can be applied to the recording. The **Inputs** tab allows us to set frame rates as shown in the following screenshot:
3. The **Program** tab includes useful options for **Recording region**, particularly the **Force popup dialogs into region** setting, as shown in the following screenshot:

![Options Dialog](image)

In the original dialog box, click on the red **rec** button. Camtasia initiates a countdown before starting to record the screen. The recording area is displayed and the controls remain accessible above or beneath the recording area. In the following screenshot, we can see the controls that are accessible while recording the screen:
When we record the screen, we should give some time at the beginning and end of the video for padding. Padding provides a little breathing room and can be trimmed out later.

4. Click on **Stop** or press **F10**. A preview window is displayed, as seen in the following screenshot. This allows us to check through the recording before deciding whether to keep it or not.

5. If we are happy with the recording, click on **Save and Edit**. If not, we can simply click on the **Delete** button to delete and start again.
Obtaining Quality Source Material

The recording is saved as a .camrec file and is made available in the **Clip Bin** window, as shown in the following screenshot. It is possible to produce the video here, but it is unlikely that we have the finished article from a single take, so we should resist the urge to produce it just yet.

![Recording from a webcam](image.png)

**Recording from a webcam**

Recording the narrator talking into a webcam is an easy way to make our video more engaging. But we should use this technique sparingly.

Showing the narrator is a good way to introduce a video, but we may not want to display the narrator throughout.

Viewers naturally relate to a voice-over when they know how the speaker looks like, but it can be distracting to see the narrator’s face from start to finish. A good compromise is to use the webcam to introduce the video (perhaps using Picture-In-Picture), and then fade it out so that the viewer can focus on the content.
Best practice for webcam captures

Camtasia can capture video of the presenter and the screen at the same time, but we'd never recommend this for a professional quality output.

Here are some reasons you might want to avoid capturing both together:

- Trained and experienced presenters can often maintain an interesting narrative while using a computer, but this is a learned skill. A voice-over will be peppered with false starts, pauses, and vocal tics that will be irritating for the viewer.
- As the narrator, if we're moving the mouse around, our gaze will be directed at the cursor—not the camera lens. We should try to maintain a steady eye contact with the camera lens at all times, and that means not trying to operate the computer while speaking.
- Simultaneous recording leaves less room for error. If we make a mistake, we'll have to re-do both video tracks from scratch.

Instead of trying to cut corners, we recommend preparing a script and recording it separately.

Using a script

We can think of a script as a series of cues, rather than something we read verbatim.

Do not write out the video narrated word for word. Instead, use a shorthand format that feels comfortable.

![Light bulb icon]

We like to list key concepts in a spreadsheet. With keywords in one column, we'll have ample space to make notes and record time cues in other columns, so we can build up a handy reference point and storyboard as the project develops.

When using a script, record the audio before recording the video that will sync to it. It's far easier to stretch and pause the video than to stretch and pause the recorded speech. Also, editing the voice-over tracks can result in stilted and unnatural voice-over tracks. Get the audio right first.

Finally, we should take care not to rush our speech. Clip speeds from a screen recording can be edited to match the voice narration, but the voice cannot be sped up or slowed down without making it sound strange. Leave plenty of pauses, speak clearly, and leave room for cuts.
How to record the webcam

When we record video from the webcam, we should give some time for padding at the beginning and end of the video. This can be trimmed out later. It gives us a little comfort when we're editing. Perform the following steps to record the webcam:

1. Navigate to Tools | Record Camera. A dialog box is displayed. Here, we can control how the video is captured, what kind of camera is used, and in what format we'll capture it. We have selected our built-in camera. The Properties and Format options, shown in the following screenshot, allow us to fine-tune the camera settings. The settings may vary depending on how we plan to use the video clip.

   ![Camera Property Settings](image)

   In this particular case, we've matched the frame rate and the resolution to the output frame rate and resolution. It's highly unlikely that our webcam video will be slowed down or zoomed at any point.

2. Click on the Start recording button. Camtasia immediately starts capturing our webcam video.
3. The **Stop recording** button, as shown in the following screenshot, becomes available while the recording is in progress. Click on the **Stop recording** button when you have finished the recording. Camtasia will process the recording and display it in the **Preview** window.

At the end of our capture, we will need to manually reach over to click on the mouse to stop recording. This will cause our head and body to move, which can look unprofessional. At the end of the video, we should pause for a second before moving, so that we can edit the end of the clip.

4. If you are happy with the recording, save it. The recording is saved as a **.wmv** file and is made available in the **Clip Bin** window within Camtasia Studio, as shown in the following screenshot:
Importing media
We can also import media files into our Clip Bin window.

Importing media gives us the freedom to acquire video from another application, if we feel that it is going to give us a better result.

Here are a few examples:

- We may want to record footage onto a standalone digital camcorder, copy the resulting capture onto the PC, and then import it into Camtasia for editing.
- We may also have video content given by third parties that we need to bring into the Camtasia project and incorporate into the edited movie. Typical examples include title sequences or location footage.
- We may have a corporate logo that we want to incorporate into the movie as part of our brand and theme.
- We may need to import a specific piece of music for a back track.

Types of files
Camtasia can import a huge range of media files. For a complete list, refer to its help documentation. A few of the important media files are described as follows:

- .camrec: This is the default format of Camtasia. A .camrec file can contain more than one stream. Note that .camrec files are not widely used in other applications; thus, if you want to export a capture for editing, avoid this format. It is ideal for transferring captures between Camtasia Studio projects.
- .avi, .mpg, .mpeg, .wmv, .mov, .mp4: These are the video files commonly used in a variety of applications on all of the platforms and operating systems. Most of the videos that we import will be in one of these formats or it will be easy to convert to one of these formats, if they are not.
- .bmp, .jpg, .jpeg, .png: These are the image file types. Note that the .gif files are not supported in Camtasia but, if we need to import a .gif file, it can easily be converted to a .png format in a third-party application. If you don't have any image editing software on your PC, you can use a free cloud-based image editing application such as Pixlr in your browser.
- .wav, .mp3, .wma: These are the audio file types recognized by Camtasia Studio. We may need to perform a conversion if the file is in a different format, but this is not normally difficult to achieve using a third-party application for Windows. Examples of such applications include WinFF, FFmpeg, Handbrake, or SUPER.
Take care with mono files and use stereo audio if at all possible. Also, ensure that the .mp3 file is encoded at 128 kbps or above, or else there will be flaws in the sound quality. Just as we are looking for a high quality video, we are also aiming for a high quality sound.

- .swf: This is an Adobe Flash format and is useful if we need to bring in multimedia from the Macromedia applications.

### How to import media

When we import media, it appears in the Camtasia's **Clip Bin** window and is sorted according to the file extension. Perform the following steps to import the media:

1. Navigate to **File** | **Import media**, as shown in the following screenshot:

![Import media](image)

2. Browse and select the media file you want to import.
3. Click on **Open**.
Obtaining Quality Source Material

The file is now in the Clip Bin window, and can be inserted into the project and edited.

Select a clip, and navigate to Edit | Add to Library, to add a media file in the Clip Bin window to the library for regular re-use in different projects.

Editing contents

At this stage, in a recording, we only need ensure all of our clips are placed on the timeline in the correct order.

It may be tempting to jump in and start the editing process. However, if we are adding audio, particularly a voice narration, we should wait. Audio plays a large part in the timing of our video, and editing our content now may create additional work later.

Summary

In this chapter, we’ve looked at planning ahead to obtain the best results. We have also devised conventions that will give our project structure.

Once our source video is the best we can achieve, it's time to start adding our audio. In the next chapter, we will look how to further improve the captured footage and make key elements stand out more clearly.
Good quality audio is an essential accompaniment to a professional Camtasia Studio video.

Whether we add voice-over narration, background music, or sound effects to emphasize the action on-screen, audio will help to engage our viewers.

An audience that is well-engaged is more able to digest the contents of the video, making it a more effective tool.

In this chapter, we will look at preparing and recording audio, adding background tracks, applying editing techniques, and choosing the right tools to enhance the audio in our projects.

Planning the audio
In Camtasia Studio, we can stack multiple audio tracks on top of each other. While this is a useful and powerful way to build a soundtrack, it can lead to a cluttered audio output if we do not plan ahead.

Audio tracks can be used for a wide range of purposes. It's best to storyboard audio to avoid creating a confusing audio mix. If we consider how each audio track will be used before we begin to overlay each file on the timeline, we can visualize the end result and resist the temptation to layer too many audio effects on top of each other.

The importance of consistency
Producing professional video in Camtasia Studio comes down to consistency and detail. The more consistent we are, the more professional the result will be. The more we pay attention to detail, the more professional the result is.
By being consistent in our use of audio effects, we can avoid creating unintentional distractions or misleading the viewer. For example, if we choose to use a ping sound to represent a mouse click, we should make sure that all mouse clicks use the same ping sound so that the viewer understands and associates the sound with the action.

A note on background music
When deciding what audio we want in our video, we should always think about our target audience and the type of message we are trying to deliver. Never use background music unless it adds to the video content.

For example, background music can be a useful way of engaging our viewer, but if we are delivering an important health and safety message, or delivering a quiz, a backing track may be distracting.

If our audience are the staff in customer-facing departments, we may not want to include audio tracks at all. We wouldn't want the sound from our videos to be audible to a customer.

Types of audio
There are three main types of audio we can add to our video:

• Voice-over tracks
• Background music
• Sound effects

Preparing to record a voice-over
Various factors affect the quality and consistency of voice-over recordings. In Camtasia Studio, we can add effects but it's best to get the source audio right in the first instance. The factors are given as follows:

• We often don't pay attention to the qualities and tones in our own voices, but they can and do change. From day to day, your tone of voice can subtly change. Air temperature, illness, or mood can affect the way your voice sounds in a recording.
In addition, the environment we use to record a voice-over can have a dramatic effect on the end result. Some rooms will give your voice natural reverb; others will sound very dead.

The equipment we use will affect the recording. For example, different microphones will produce different results.

When we prepare for a voice-over recording, we must aim to keep our voice, environment, and equipment as stable and consistent as possible. That means we should aim to record the voice-over in one session so that we can control all these factors.

Voice-over recording is always a long process and involves trial, error, and multiple takes. We should allow more time than we feel is strictly necessary. Many recordings inevitably overrun. If any sections of the recording are questionable, we should aim to record all of the alternatives in the same session for a seamless result.

The studio environment
Most Camtasia Studio users do not have access to a professional recording studio. This need not be a problem. We can use practically any quiet room to record our voice-over, although there are some basic pointers that will improve the result.

When choosing a studio location, consider the following:

- Ambient noise: Try to record in quiet environment. If we can use an empty room where there are no passers by or devices making any noise, this will make our recording clearer. Choose a room away from potential sources of noise (busy corridors, main roads, and so on).
- Noise leakage: Ensure that any doors and windows are closed to minimize noise pollution from outside the room and outside the building.
- Equipment noise: Ensure that all unnecessary programs on the PC are closed to prevent any unwanted sounds or alerts. End any background tasks, such as email checkers or task schedulers, and ensure any instant messaging software is closed or in offline mode.
Working with Audio

- **Positioning**: Experiment with placing the microphone in different places around the room. The acoustics of a room can greatly effect the quality of a recording and taking time to find the best place for the microphone will help. For efficiency, we can test the audio quality quickly by wearing headphones while speaking into the microphone.

- **Consider posture**: Standing up opens up the diaphragm and improves the sound of our voice when we record. Avoid recording while seated, and hold any notes or papers at eye level to maintain a constant tone.

Using scripts

When it comes to voice-over recording, a well-prepared script is the most important piece of preparation we can do.

Working from a script is far simpler than attempting to make up our narration as we go along. It helps to maintain a good pace in the video and greatly reduces the need for multiple takes, making recording far more efficient.

Creating a script need not be time-consuming. If we have already planned out and recorded our video track, writing a script will be far simpler.

Writing an effective script

The script you write should support the action in the video and maintain a healthy pace. There are a number of tips we can bear in mind to do this. These tips are given as follows:

- **Sync audio with video**: Plan the script to coincide with any actions we take in the video. This may mean incorporating pauses into the script to allow a certain on-screen action to complete.

- **Be flexible**: We may need to go back and lengthen a section of video to incorporate the voice-over and explanation. It is better to do this than rush the voice-over and attempt to force it to fit.

- **Use basic copywriting techniques**: We should consider the message in the video and use the appropriate style. For example, if we are describing a process, we would want to use the active voice. In an internal company update, we may want to adopt a more conversational tone.

- **Be direct and concise**: A short and simple statement is far easier to process than a long, drawn out argument.
We should always test our script prior to the recording session. We should also be prepared to re-write and hone the content. Reading a script aloud is a useful way of estimating its length and picking out any awkward phrases that do not flow. We will save time if we perfect the script before we sit down in front of the microphone.

Recording equipment
Most laptop computers have a built in microphone, as do some desktop computers.

While these microphones are perfectly adequate for video or audio chats and other casual uses, we should not use them to create Camtasia Studio recordings.

Although the quality may be good, and the audio may be clear, these microphones often pick up a large amount of ambient noise, such as the fans inside the computer. Additionally, the audio captured using built-in microphones often requires processing and amplification, which can degrade its quality.

Camtasia Studio has a range of editing tools that can help you to tweak your audio recording. However, processing should always be a last resort. The more we use a tool to process our voice-over, the more the source material is prone to being distorted. If we have better quality source material, we will not need to rely on these features; this will make the editing process much simpler.

When working in Camtasia Studio, it is preferable to invest in a good quality external microphone. Basic microphones are inexpensive and offer considerably better audio recording than built-in microphones.

Choosing a microphone
External microphones are very affordable. Unless you have specific need for a professional-standard microphone, we recommend a USB microphone. Many of these microphones are sold as podcasting microphones and are perfectly adequate for use in Camtasia Studio.

There are two main types of external microphone:

- Consider a lapel microphone if you plan to operate the computer as you record or present to the camera while you are speaking. Lapel microphones clip on to your clothing and leave your hands free.
- If you are more comfortable working at a desk, a microphone with a sturdy tripod stand will be a good investment.
An external microphone with built in noise cancellation can give us a degree of control at the recording stage, rather than having to edit out noise later.

A good stand will give us a greater degree of flexibility when it comes to microphone placement.

**How to set up an external microphone**

We can set up the external microphone before we begin recording by following the given steps:

1. Navigate to **Tools | Voice Narration**. The Voice Narration screen is displayed.
2. Click on **Audio setup wizard**. The Audio Setup Wizard screen is displayed.
3. Select the **Audio device**, as shown in the following screenshot.
Recording voice-over
Before we begin, we must choose the ideal audio format for our video.

About audio formats
In Camtasia Studio, we can record audio in a wide range of formats and choose from a comprehensive list of attributes that determine the quality and file size.

The format we select will alter the available attributes in the Audio Format drop-down list. However, note that compressed audio formats, such as MPEG Layer-3 (also known as mp3), may degrade quality. Compressed formats are ideal for use when the recorded file must be kept to its lowest possible size. When producing a video, it is unlikely that file size would be a major concern, so we will achieve better-quality results if we select the uncompressed audio format, PCM. PCM is stored as a WAV file in Camtasia Studio for Windows.

In the following screenshot, we can see a range of potential attributes for our audio recording. The audio recording options may include:

- The sample rate, shown as a value in kHz (kilohertz). The figure tells us the number of samples per second.
- The resolution, shown as a value in bits.
- The number of channels; mono audio recordings have one channel, whereas stereo audio recordings have two channels.

The higher quality our audio recording, the larger the file size of our project. In most cases, CD-quality audio is sufficient; this would be a setting of 44.100 kHz, 16-bit resolution, in stereo.

How to choose the audio format
1. Navigate to Tools | Voice Narration. The Voice Narration screen is displayed.
2. Click on Audio Setup Wizard. The Audio Setup Wizard is displayed.
3. Click on **Audio Format**. The **Audio Format** window is displayed, as shown in the following screenshot:

![Audio Format Window](image)

**How to record voice narration**

Once our script is ready, recording the voice-over is a fairly straightforward process. There are some simple steps to help make the editing process a little easier. These steps are given as follows:

- Break up the script to small bite-sized chunks and record each individual chunk.
- Leave plenty of space before and after a sentence. These can be removed in the editing process.
- Speak clearly and directly into the microphone. Try to maintain an even tone.
Before starting the recording, use the input level slider to set the sensitivity of the microphone. While speaking comfortably and naturally, check that the input doesn’t *peak* (go into the red). Peaking may be a sign that the recording will be distorted.

When we are happy with our preparation we can start recording. Follow the given steps to start recording:

1. Click on **Start Recording**. The play head begins moving along the timeline.
2. Start the voice narration. Click on **Stop Recording** when complete.
3. Name the file and save it as a `.wav` file. The recording is added to the timeline and is available in the **Clip Bin** window, as shown in the following screenshot:
Working with Audio

Editing our voice narration clips
It is important that we complete all of our recording before we begin editing. If we edit clips on the go we will likely find that we are making extra work for ourselves.

After recording all of our clips, line them up on the timeline and listen back to the entire narration. It helps to get a feel for the whole voice narration, rather than visualizing it as a series of clips.

It is important that we are happy with each of our narration clips before we proceed any further. If we want to change any phrases, words, or intonation, now is the time.

Trimming and syncing content
When we are happy with all of our narration clips, we should trim off any unwanted excess. This gives us enough room to adjust the positioning of the clips if we need to speed up or slow down the flow of the video.

Next, we should synchronize the video and audio. This is one of the most important parts of editing our video together. Getting the timing right can make the difference between a video that holds people's attention or one that is quickly forgotten. There are a few simple steps to follow:

• Make sure the voice narration is slightly ahead of the on screen action. This only has to be a short delay between the voice and the video, but it allows our viewers to process a narrated instruction before the action appears on the screen.
• Try to leave enough time for any callouts or other features we plan to add.
• Try to keep an even pace without too much "dead air" where nothing is happening on the screen.

We should continuously review our work as we synchronize our content and build the structure on the Timeline. It is important that the timing remains consistent throughout the video; continuous review is this the best way to achieve a smooth result.

After lining up our clips on the timeline, we can begin to use the sound editing tools.
Editing tools
The editing tools allow us to fine tune our audio clips.

Adjusting the height of the Timeline and the audio Track allows us to view the waveform in more detail. The mirror waveform option can be used to view the complete waveform. Navigate to Tools | Options to adjust the mirror waveform option.

Navigate to Tools | Audio to see the editing tools. The editing tools allow us to do the following:

- The volume of entire clips can be adjusted
- Audio points help us to apply accurate edits by breaking up a clip into sections
- Silence can be added to small sections of a clip
- Clips can be faded in or faded out

We should ensure that each voice narration clip has a fade in and fade out applied to it. For this reason, the clip should have a short gap before and after the narration so that we can apply the fade in these areas. Fading in and out prevents unwanted clicks when a clip starts or ends. In the next screenshot, we have added a fade in and fade out to an audio clip.
Volume leveling

Volume leveling helps to keep the audio at a consistent volume throughout the clip. This is a useful quick-fix tool if some parts of the clip are noticeably quieter than others. However, volume leveling can compromise the quality of the clip.

If we have taken the time to obtain a quality recording first, we should find that we do not need to make much use of this feature. If your audio levels are particularly out of sync, re-recording the audio may be less troublesome.

There are three volume leveling settings; these are as follows:

- Low volume variation
- Medium volume variation
- High volume variation

These are based on the amount of variation between the quietest part of our recording and the loudest.

The bigger the difference between these parts, the higher the volume variation setting we should apply. However, the higher the setting, the more the recording is distorted.

How to use volume leveling

Use the follow steps to apply volume leveling to our audio:

1. Select the track we want to edit. (Hold Shift to select multiple tracks)
2. Navigate to Tools | Audio. The audio screen is displayed.
3. Tick Enable volume leveling.
4. Select the **Volume variation** setting we want to apply, or select **Custom settings**. In the next screenshot, **Custom settings** is selected, allowing us to manually adjust **Ratio**, **Threshold** and **Gain** of the audio clip.
Noise removal

No matter how well we prepare for an audio recording, there is still a chance that background noise can be picked up on a microphone. Ambient noise, electrical equipment, and the environment can all be picked up in a Camtasia Studio recording.

Noise removal is a useful feature for removing this type of unwanted background noise. It can be applied to single tracks to reduce the severity of the noise. But it does have a slight impact on the sound quality of our audio.

If we are applying noise reduction to one track, we should try to apply the same settings across all tracks, even if the noise is not present on all of them. This helps to ensure the quality of the audio is consistent.

How to use noise reduction

We can take the following steps to apply noise reduction to our audio:

1. Select the track you want to edit. (Hold Shift to select multiple tracks)
2. Navigate to Tools | Audio. The audio screen is displayed.
3. Tick Enable Noise Removal. The noise removal is applied to the clip. The audio track is highlighted in orange.
4. Click on Advanced. This allows us to fine-tune our noise removal, as shown in the next screenshot.
Captions

Captions are a written version of your voice-over audio track. They appear on screen as an overlay to your video content.

Captions can help users to follow the voice-over more easily.

Captions are four seconds long by default. Navigate to Tools | Options to adjust the default duration. Alternatively, each caption can be manually re-sized.
Working with captions

Captions are added on their own track on the timeline. We can control the content, duration, and syncing of the captions in the Captions tab.

When deciding whether to add captions, we must consider our audience and the layout of our canvas. Captions can be distracting if placed over some important action taking place on screen. If we are making use of text callouts, we may not need to use captions at all.

When typing a caption into the field, the text may turn red. This means that the caption is too long and will not be displayed. We must split the caption in order to make sure all of the text is legible.

Camtasia Studio allows us to move captions to different timeline tracks.

Speech-to-text

Camtasia Studio can automatically convert one or more audio tracks to text. This is a useful time-saving feature and it can assist in the speedy creation of video captions. However, it does require some preparation.

Initially, Camtasia Studio must learn to interpret our voice. The software has an integral learning feature that we can use to improve its voice recognition results.

- We must then ensure our microphone is correctly positioned and the audio is of a sufficient quality for the software to capture words accurately
- Camtasia Studio can be "taught" custom words
- Captions are automatically synced with video content on the timeline, making it easy to see each section of text, its associated audio file, and any video content that runs alongside

Voice training in Camtasia Studio can only learn one voice in detail. The training process will not be effective if multiple users use the training feature.
How to convert voice-overs to text

Use the following steps to convert voice-overs to text.

1. Navigate to Tools | Captions. The Captions screen is displayed.
2. Click on Speech-to-text. The Speech-to-text window is displayed. This allows us to begin training the voice recognition software, add words to the dictionary, and further adjust our microphone settings, as shown in the next screenshot.
3. When we are ready, click on Continue. The transcription process begins as shown in the next screenshot.
4. The complete transcription is broken into captions and placed on the timeline. Edit the captions to ensure that they are correct, as shown in the next screenshot.

We should synchronize any edits with the voice recognition software. This helps to continually teach the software to recognize our voice.

**Limitations of speech-to-text**

Before we use speech to text, we should be aware of its limitations. These are given as follows:

- Automatic speech recognition is rarely 100 per cent accurate. For many users, the speech-to-text feature will save time; for others, the results will be too flawed to be useful. Our results may vary depending on voice-over style, accent, equipment, the complexity of the terminology in the voice-over, and the overall quality of the source audio.

- An accurate interpretation of a voice-over will still need some work before it is fully correct. In particular, the punctuation and grammar will need to be reviewed for your captions to make sense on screen.
Camtasia Studio offers us the option of converting all audio in the project to text. It is rarely a good idea to use this feature. It results in every sound in the video being interpreted by the speech-to-text engine, even if it is not spoken. This often results in a jumbled output, particularly if background music has been added to the project before the conversion takes place.

**Adding background music**

We can add a background track to any Camtasia Studio video. This can help to keep the video interesting, keeps the action moving at a steady pace, and retains the interest of our viewers.

However, we should take care to use background music correctly and appropriately:

- Most audio is owned by a copyright holder. Using audio without permission will infringe copyright.
- There are a great many sources on the internet where we can download royalty-free music, but we may still require a license to download these tracks.
- There is a range of music in the Camtasia Studio library. These library tracks are free to use without the need for copyright clearance. If these are not suitable, or the video has a particular theme or branding, import tracks to the Clip Bin and save them in the library.
- Be careful when adding music to a video with voice narration. The music must remain firmly in the background and the voice narration must always be clear and easy to hear.

**Adding sound effects**

When used correctly, sound effects can enhance a video. We can use sound effects to highlight transitions between different sections of a video or to emphasize visual cues we plan to use. Essentially, sound effects add an audio accompaniment to our visuals.

We may have an effect that we use to mark the beginning of a video. This can be a good way of branding our content. We may also create various sound cues and use them throughout a video series.
Working with Audio

However, we must always consider how we use these effects in our video:

- We must ensure that any effects are used consistently throughout the video.
- The sound effects must not interfere with any voice narration and should not be drowned out by music.
- We should be careful not to add too much audio to the video. If we have narration, music, and effects, the end result can be confusing for the viewer.

To add the majority of sound effects, we simply import the media file to Clip Bin and place it where we like on the timeline.

How to change the sound of a mouse click

Camtasia Studio gives us tools that can emphasize the sound of a mouse click. This is a fantastic way to emphasize the use of the mouse in an instructional video, screencast, or training video.

The sound used for the mouse click can be customized. For example, we may want a left-click and a right-click to be represented by different sounds. To do this follow the given steps:

1. Navigate to Tools | Cursor Effects. The Cursor Effects screen is displayed.
2. Click on Click Sound Effect. Different sounds and volume settings can be applied to the left-click and the right-click, as shown in the next screenshot. To preview the mouse click and laptop click sound effect, we can click on the speaker icon next to the volume slider.
Summary
In this chapter, we have looked at a range of ways to improve the quality of the audio in our Camtasia Studio projects. We have considered voice-over recording techniques, equipment, editing, sound effects, and background music.

In the next chapter we are going to look at enhancing our video with zooming and panning techniques, callouts, transitions, and animations.
Enhancing, Editing, and Drawing the Eye

Camtasia Studio offers a number of useful tools that will help get the best out of our video content and present it professionally.

In this chapter, we will insert callouts, deploy zooming and panning techniques, use transitions, and insert animations. By the end of the chapter, we'll have a refined result.

By using Camtasia's tools appropriately and tastefully, we can get our message across very efficiently and make our video content more engaging. However, we need to enhance the content without distracting the viewer, and that means using effects sparingly. A little time spent on planning and storyboarding will help us to ensure that we consider the overall flow of our video, rather than trying to bombard the viewer with flashy effects.

Design and planning

Camtasia Studio gives us the flexibility to experiment with video. One of the most basic things we can vary is the presentation and position of the video content itself.

For example, we do not always need to fill the entire canvas with our captured video; doing so could be uninteresting. Instead, we might choose to use part of the canvas for video, part of the canvas for a secondary video stream, and another area for additional content: callouts, annotations, or captions.

It's best to spend some time on design and planning now, before we start to put the video together, so we can incorporate these extra features as we go along.
Getting started with design

The design process we'll use is similar to storyboarding, although it need not be particularly formal. We can come up with a format that suits our own workflow. But there are a few key questions we should always ask ourselves at this early stage as it will help us to save time and edit our video more efficiently. These few key questions are as follows:

• In the first chapter, we talked about planning our dimensions. Now we have to consider how our desired canvas layout will work within those dimensions. For example, the next screenshot shows how the video would look with the captured content in the top left of the canvas and a callout to the bottom right. This kind of complex canvas design might look great on a large screen presentation but, on a small smartphone screen, the content we have placed around the sides could be difficult to read.

When designing complex layouts, consider the limitations of functions such as zoom and pan. In this example, a zoom effect would zoom the entire canvas, so our carefully planned layout would be wasted.

In the next screenshot, we can see an example of a canvas where the video does not occupy the whole space. The video is in the upper left corner, leaving room below and to the sides for callouts and other features.
Different people absorb information in different ways. For instructional videos or training videos, we could use callouts with this in mind, tailoring the sequence and structure of the video content to meet the needs of active or passive learners.

Pleasing both active and passive learners is possible with care. Our video could adopt a passive style where the viewer sits back and watches the full video. Then, we could create a copy of the video, inserting pauses and encouraging our viewers to try out each instruction. Users could be given the option to choose the method that suits them best at the start.

A typical book flows logically through a sequence of chapters. Our video should also be logically divided into chapters, each one having its own distinct beginning and end. Chapters are essential in creating a logical flow and navigational structure, and they also help us to introduce transitions in the right places. Chapters effectively give our storyboard structure and purpose.

Planning for consistency
When we are designing our video, we need to decide which features, tools, and effects to use before we start editing.

It’s important to include effects that serve a purpose and exclude those that do not. This helps to maintain a consistent, standardized style and minimize visual clutter.

Mixing transitions and effects is a good way to introduce dynamism and unpredictability, and that could suit a particular type of video, such as an advertisement. However, this approach would be undesirable in a corporate video.

Above all, we must be completely consistent in how we use each feature, tool, or effect. For example, if we decide to use a spotlight to draw the eye to certain areas of our canvas, we should use this same effect throughout. This helps the viewer to understand what we are trying to show them. If we changed to Sketch Motion Rectangle half way through, this would be distracting to the viewer, and they might miss an important instruction.
Designing the canvas

One of the most overlooked design features is the canvas itself:

- We can tweak it extensively to meet our needs, perhaps to add interest or introduce branding and custom color schemes
- Alternatively, we can fill the entire screen with our video content and ignore the canvas customization options

How to adjust the canvas color

When we first choose our screen dimensions, we also select a canvas color. We can change these settings at any time in the editing process.

The default canvas color is black. We may want our canvas to adopt a corporate color scheme or to add visual interest.

1. Navigate to View | Project | Editing Dimensions. The Editing Dimensions window is displayed, as shown in the next screenshot.
2. Click on Background color.
3. Select the color you would like to use.
4. Click on OK.

**Callouts**

The main purpose of a callout is to draw the viewer's eye to a specific area on the canvas.

Callouts are arguably the most widely used annotation feature in Camtasia Studio videos, and for good reason. They are flexible, easy to use, and very effective.

Callouts are most useful when they are timed to coincide with voice narration. We can also use them to emphasize a text instruction or a particular area on the canvas.

**Types of callouts**

Camtasia Studio ships with many built-in callouts. These are split into different categories. Each category is briefly described below.

- **Shapes with Text** are essentially text boxes. Each box is shaped differently and can accommodate a certain amount of text. The callout can be faded in and out for a smooth transition, which will draw the eye of the viewer.

- **Shapes** are arrows and lines. These can be drawn directly onto the canvas area and customized. These can also fade in and out.

- **Sketch Motion** callouts are animated shapes. The animation takes place at the beginning of the callout, so it's important to note that we cannot fade in this type of callout.

- **Special** callouts are non-standard effects that are designed for specific purposes. For example, the blur and pixelate effects are very useful if you wish to mask personal data in a recorded video. There is also a highlighter callout, and there are special callouts that prompt the user to press certain keys on the keyboard.
In the next screenshot, we can see the callout types.
Customizing callouts
We can edit the appearance of any callout. Camtasia Studio gives us the tools
to change the thickness and/or color of the borders, add drop shadows behind
callouts, change the fill color, tweak the font, and change a number of other settings.

Customization is useful, but it can introduce inconsistency. Making multiple
matching callouts can be very time consuming. While Camtasia Studio remembers
the settings we have applied and uses the same settings for subsequent callouts,
those settings are overwritten when we create a new callout.

It is therefore better to copy and paste a callout to create an exact match. We can then
make edits while retaining the basic look and feel of the copied callout.

Best-practice tips
When using callouts, we must always use them to support our video content rather
than distract from it:

• Don’t use so many callouts that the viewer's attention is taken away from the
main video content.

• A callout can be made to fade in or out of the video. The duration can be
manually edited. We should be careful to time our fades correctly. A callout
should fade in shortly after an instruction is spoken or appears on screen; this
allows our viewers to process the instruction without visual distractions.

• After creating a callout, we should always review the pace of the video and
the speed of the callouts' appearance on screen. There should be enough
time for a viewer to process the instruction accompanying the callout, notice
the callout, read the text within the callout, and process its meaning. If your
video is likely to be watched by people who do not speak your language
fluently, allow extra time for this process.

Camtasia Studio allows you to extend frames in a video. This
is a simple and effective way of giving the reader more time to
read the contents of a callout.
How to insert a callout

We will now look at how we can insert a callout:

1. Select the position on the timeline where we want to add the callout.
2. Navigate to **Tools | Callouts...** The callout options are displayed.
3. Click on **Add Callout**. A callout is added to the timeline and canvas, as shown in the next screenshot.

After inserting the callout, we can manually adjust the position, size, duration, fades, and any other settings relevant to that callout type.

If we need to add multiple customized callouts, it is usually quicker to copy and paste an existing callout.
How to make a callout hotspot

A callout hotspot is an enhanced callout that the viewer can click with their mouse.

Hotspots can link to a web page, an intranet document, or another part of the video.

We can use callout hotspots to encourage the viewer to interact with the video or make the content more useful. For example, we may wish to publicize a website address for marketing purposes, or we may add custom buttons to pause the video.

We can insert multiple hotspots to give the viewer a choice of what to do next. For example, if our video includes a section with a complicated series of instructions, we may want to give the viewer the chance to watch it more than once. We could insert one hotspot that repeats the instructions and a second hotspot that advances the video to the next section.

We can also force the video to stop so that the user has to click on the hotspot to continue watching. To do this, we can check the Pause at end of callout checkbox as shown in the following screenshot:
Zoom and pan
Zooming is a useful way to show detailed areas of our canvas by enlarging it to fill the screen.

Panning involves moving the viewing frame from one area of the screen to another. This allows us to zoom in then shift focus to another part of the canvas without zooming out.

- As discussed in the previous chapter, zooming screencast video can make the content look blurred. It is important to consider the resolution of video when applying zoom effects.
- A zoom and/or a pan will affect the entire canvas, not just one area. For example, if we have added callouts on the canvas, and then we apply a zoom or pan, the callouts may disappear.

We can add callouts after the zoom and/or pan is complete, and then remove the callouts before the effect is reversed. This results in a more professional finish, since the callouts do not disappear. However, it may take slightly longer to create the sequence because of the precise timing required.

Best-practice tips
Let's look at a few tips that will help you along the way:

- When zooming in to a particular part of the canvas to show detail, zoom out as soon as the action has been completed. This helps to give the viewer context.
- After a zoom in, we should always return to exactly the same place on the canvas when we zoom out. That usually means we must manually adjust the coordinates after the zoom to match the coordinates before the zoom. We will look at this in the next section.
- We should introduce the minimum amount of movement when panning to avoid making the viewer feel disoriented.

How to insert a zoom
We will now look at how we can insert a zoom:

1. Select the position on the timeline where we want to add the zoom.
2. Click **Tools | Zoom-n-Pan**. The **Zoom-n-Pan** options are displayed, as shown in the following screenshot:
3. Adjust the dimensions of the zoom area to insert the zoom. The zoom is added to the timeline as shown in the following screenshot. Note how the zoom in ends at the selected point on the timeline.

- To add a panning effect, we select a new point on the timeline and go back to the Zoom-n-Pan options. When we drag the zoom area to another place on the canvas, the panning effect is added to the timeline.

- To zoom out, we repeat the zoom in process and adjust the dimensions to select the full canvas.

To ensure we have returned to the original canvas area, select a point on the timeline before the zoom in was added and click Tools | Visual Properties... The X, Y, and Z values under Position should match the values after the zoom out.
Transitions
Transitions are an effective tool to break up our video into manageable sections. They can add pauses and signal to the viewer that we are moving on to the next section.

Transitions can also smooth over an edit to a video whilst still retaining the link between the two pieces of content.

Camtasia Studio offers many pre-set transitions, each with a different animated effect. We should take some time to choose the right transitions for our video and ensure that each transition serves a defined purpose.

For example, we may use a fade through black to represent the end of a group of instructions. This transition should then only be used when a group of instructions comes to an end. If we need to use a transition for a different purpose, such as linking completely different videos together during a sequence of instructions, we should use a different transition.

Best-practice tips
Let's look at a few tips that will help you along the way:

- Transitions are the glue that joins sections of video together. They should always be used sparingly and subtly.
- We should take care not to distract or irritate the viewer with our choice of transitions.
- It is normally best to design a video with one transition in mind, then use that transition consistently. There are some situations where we may want to mix transitions to create unpredictable effects, but this is rare and generally undesirable.
How to insert a transition

We will now look at how to insert a transition:

1. Select the position on the timeline where we want to add the transition. Please note; the transition must occur between two video clips.

2. Navigate to **Tools | Transitions...** The **Transitions** options are displayed, as shown in the following screenshot:

![Transition Options](image)

3. Click and drag the transition to the timeline.
Visual properties

Visual properties allow us to fine-tune the look of items on our canvas.

We may achieve this by adding a drop shadow, placing a border around an item, adding or removing colors, and so on. We can animate our items, make them spin, disappear, and re-appear.

Effectively, we are creating our own custom transitions. Just as with transitions, it is important to remember that visual properties should serve a purpose and should not be added to impress the viewer.

A little extra animation at the beginning or end of a video can add a nice finishing touch, but too much animation can be distracting and will look unprofessional.

Best-practice tips

Let's look at a few tips that will help you along the way:

- Visual Properties are normally best added at the end of the editing process. This helps us to get the timing right first.
- We must be consistent with the settings of our visual properties. For example, if we add a shadow to one instance, we should try to use the same properties for all other shadows we use.

How to edit visual properties

Let's look at how we can edit visual properties:

1. Select the clip or item on the timeline to edit.
2. Navigate to **Tools | Visual Properties...** The visual properties options are displayed, as shown in the following screenshot:

**How to animate an item on the canvas**

We will now look at how to animate an item on the canvas:

1. Select the clip or item on the time line to edit.
2. Navigate to **Tools | Visual Properties...** The **Visual Properties** options are displayed.
3. Click on **Add animation**. An animation is added to the item, as shown in the next screenshot.

![Add animation screenshot](image)

4. Set different visual properties for the start and end of the animation.

**Cursor effects**

When we record the screen in Camtasia Studio, it records the cursor alongside the video. We can then edit the cursor.

We may find it useful to add effects to the cursor to make it more noticeable. At times, we may wish to hide the cursor.

We can also add sound effects that are linked to the click of our mouse.

If we ever want to draw attention to the cursor, we can animate it. For example, we could temporarily enlarge it when we are about to perform an important action.

- We should not animate the cursor whilst it is in motion. We can extend a clip to avoid movement if necessary.
Best-practice tips
Let’s look at a few tips that will help you along the way:

- Always keep your cursor movement smooth and steady, rather than darting around the screen. Rehearsing movements prior to recording makes this easier.
- If mouse movement is irregular, we could re-record the video. Alternatively, we could hide the mouse cursor temporarily.
- We should not highlight the cursor unless it is a particularly important part of the scene. If we unnecessarily draw attention to the cursor, we are introducing a distraction that could detract from the contents of the video.

How to add a cursor effect
Let’s look at how we can add a cursor effect:

1. Navigate to Tools | Cursor Effects... The Cursor Effects options are displayed, as shown in the following screenshot:
How to animate the cursor

We will now look at how to animate the cursor:

1. Select the position on the timeline where we want to add the animation.
2. Navigate to **Tools | Cursor Effects...** The **Cursor Effects** options are displayed.
3. Click on **Add Animation**. A cursor animation is added to the timeline, as shown in the following screenshot:

   ![Cursor Animation Screenshot](image)

4. Set different cursor effects for the start and end of the animation.

**Summary**

Camtasia Studio is notable for its powerful effects and ease of use. This means that effects are very easy to add, and it can be tempting to add too many at once.

When editing a new video, it is important to plan our effects so that they support the video content and boost the viewer's understanding of our subject matter. For a professional result, we should not allow the effects to take center stage.

Additionally, any effects we use should be planned properly, timed carefully, and used only where they benefit the viewer.

At this stage, we may want to publish our work; however, there are some more tools we could consider using. In the next chapter, we will look at ways to polish our video with these tools as well as more complex edits.
Creating More Complex Video Sequences

When creating more complex videos and video series, we want to take full advantage of Camtasia's features to add the finishing touches. In the long run, this will help us to create our own brand of video, which will help our users to become familiar with it.

In this chapter, we will look at using the library to store items for future use, using markers, snapping and grouping to fine-tune our edits, and adding quizzes to help our viewers to understand the content.

Libraries

In the last two chapters, we've been working with Clip Bin in Camtasia Studio. The library is a more advanced storage location for media files.

We can use the library to store items that we want to reuse. Here are some examples:

- Short sequences comprising of several clips
- Title sequences
- Custom animations
- Customized callouts
- Customized transitions

These items are called assets and the library is a repository for them.

As we create new items, the library can be used as a storage locker. This helps us to stay organized, and we can also save time when editing because we do not need to keep recreating the same items repeatedly.
Creating More Complex Video Sequences

Using the same assets across a video, or a series of videos, helps to give the viewer a frame of reference. It also promotes consistency, which is one of the main themes we are working towards in this book. Consistency will always make our videos look more professional.

When working with the library, we should take care to use it as a way of streamlining the editing process. We should not use our assets for the sake of making the video longer. This will only serve to encourage the user to skip over the content, and they may miss something vital in the process.

Managing library content

The library in a Camtasia project contains all of the assets associated with that project. When we work on multiple videos in a series, we can reuse a library from another project by importing it. This helps us to give all of the individual videos a consistent look and feel.

We may also want to export and import a library if:

- We pick up a project started by another Camtasia Studio user
- We download a pre-assembled library full of royalty-free content from the internet
- We need to switch computers
- We want to collaborate with colleagues while ensuring we maintain a consistent style through all of our videos

When we upgrade to a newer version of Camtasia Studio, we must remember to export our existing library assets and import them into the new version. Camtasia Studio will alert you if a conversion is necessary.

How to add an item to the library

Take the following steps to add an item to the library:

1. Select the item we want, to add on the timeline.
2. Navigate to Edit | Add to Library.... The item is added to the library. We can rename it if we need to. We can also drag-and-drop it into a specific location.
How to export a library
Take the following steps to export the library:

1. Navigate to File | Library | Export Library. The Export Library As Zip window is displayed, as shown in the following screenshot:

   ![Export Library As Zip Window]

2. Choose the location and filename for the export.
3. Click on OK. The library is exported as a .libzip file, ready to be imported into another Camtasia Studio project.

How to import a library
Take the following steps to import a library:

1. Navigate to File | Library | Import Zipped Library. The Import Zipped Library window is displayed, as shown in the following screenshot:

   ![Import Zipped Library Window]

2. Click on the folder icon and select the .libzip file we wish to import.
3. Click on OK. The library is imported into Camtasia Studio, and its assets are immediately available for use.
If we already have content in our video project, we should note that files with the same name will not be imported. This means, we will always retain the files in our existing library and only import new media. It effectively prevents us from accidentally overwriting assets we may have updated. To override this, rename the asset and try the import again.

Advanced marker use
Markers are used to highlight sections of the timeline. When building more complex videos, markers become one of the most useful tools in the editing process.

Markers make it easy to map out the structure of our video, perform quick edits, and quickly locate sections of video.

Types of markers
There are two types of markers in Camtasia Studio. Both are used for referencing video, but their purposes are slightly different. Each provides a thumbnail image of the canvas and can be given a title to describe what it represents:

- **Global markers**: They are placed on the timeline. They are not linked to individual pieces of the content. If we move the content, the global marker does not move.
- **Content markers**: They are attached at a specific time in a specific piece of content, such as a video clip. If we move the content, the content marker moves with it.

Markers can be created as we record the screen; this can save some time, but it can also be distracting. The microphone can also pick up the sound of our mouse and keyboard movement. It is therefore better to review the video after recording and add the markers during that review.
Using markers for navigation

Markers can be used to create chapters in a video. This is an easy way to segment a video to allow viewers to navigate it more easily. The chapters can be displayed as links next to the video output, giving the user the opportunity to move between sections quickly.

Before we begin to add markers for navigation, we must to switch on marker view in the timeline. To do this, navigate to View | Show Marker View. This creates a space for markers above the timeline and above each track, as shown in the following screenshot:

How to insert a marker

Take the following steps to insert a marker:

1. Select the track to add the marker to.

   ![Diagram showing how to insert a marker](image)

   There is a small gap above the timeline. If we hover the mouse over this gap, a blue line and a diamond will be displayed where the marker will be added.
2. Click on the blue diamond at the position where we want to add the marker. A marker is added to the timeline, as shown in the following screenshot:

![Marker added to timeline](image)

Using markers to create a Table of Contents

We can use markers to build an interactive **Table of Contents** (TOC).

A TOC will make our video easier to navigate. This is particularly useful when the video we are building is of a longer duration.

However, a TOC can only be added in the following circumstances:

- We must produce the video as an .mp4 file, because this file type supports the HTML5 code necessary to display our TOC
- Our viewers must watch the video in the Camtasia Studio viewer, as it is the only viewer that supports these additional features
Regardless of our chosen output format and choice of viewer, some older browsers do not support the newer HTML5 tags needed to display our TOC. As such, viewers using these browsers will not be able to use the TOC. We will discuss the output file types further in Chapter 5, Publishing Tips and Techniques.

Building a TOC in the Production Wizard

In order to have a TOC in our video, we must add the necessary markers during the editing process. The TOC will then be created and incorporated into the video output when we produce the video using the Production Wizard.

All of the markers we have used in our video could theoretically be included in the TOC. However, we may have added markers purely for editing reasons. If there are a large number of markers in our project, the process of building the TOC can be quite complicated.

There are two ways to deal with the creation of the TOC:

- When we are ready to produce our work, we can delete all of the markers in our project and then recreate only the markers we need to create our chapters

  This is far easier to manage when working in the Production Wizard, but it could cause problems if we need to revisit and re-edit our video later.

- We can retain all of the markers in our project, and then pick out the ones that we will designate as chapter markers

  This makes the Production Wizard more cluttered, but it retains all of our marker information in case we need to come back to it later.

In order to produce a video with a TOC, we must launch the Production Wizard, which we will discuss in detail in Chapter 5, Publishing Tips and Techniques.
In the Production Wizard, we must ensure that we select the .mp4 file format and the Flash/HTML5 player to enable the TOC. The following screenshot shows the player options where the Table of contents must be checked in the Options tab:

The following screenshot shows the stage in the Production Wizard where we can begin to build our TOC. This appears later in the production process. Here we can select which markers have to be included in the TOC. We can also set the following options:

- Choose whether our markers are associated with numbers
- Force our TOC to be displayed as soon as the video is opened
- Choose which side of the video window will be designated for the TOC
- Select whether the TOC should be shown as a text-only list or with a video thumbnail to aid navigation
We can also rename our markers to make them easier to identify.
Snapping

When we move an item on the timeline, Camtasia Studio has a snapping feature that forces the item to line up at a reference point. If a vertical yellow line appears on the timeline, we know that Camtasia Studio is snapping our edit to the nearest possible reference point.

The reference points are determined by the following four items in our timeline:

- The edges of other clips in the timeline
- The playhead that indicates the current position on the timeline
- Any markers we have created
- Any quizzes we have created

Snapping is designed to help you make more consistent edits so that the content is aligned. When getting to know Camtasia Studio, snapping is very useful. It makes neat edits effortless.

As our skills become more refined, and our edits more ambitious, snapping may be less desirable. It could prevent us from making fine adjustments to the content on the timeline, and it could introduce unwanted gaps between clips, transitions, or animations.

We can choose to allow snapping in our project, but override it for individual items. To do this, we hold Ctrl when we click and drag the item.

How to switch off snapping

Take the following steps to switch off the snapping feature:

1. Navigate to View | Timeline snapping.
2. Remove the tick from each feature as desired, as shown in the following screenshot. We can untick all of these if we wish.

![Screenshot of Camtasia Studio interface](image)

**Grouping**

Grouping is a new feature in Camtasia Studio. It allows us to layer up several items and combine them into a single grouped item.

The items we combine can be on the same timeline track or on different timeline tracks.

This has several benefits when editing, which are explained as follows:

- It makes edits easier to perform; we can move the layered items as though they were one item
- If the clips are all on the same timeline track, grouping makes it quick and easy to apply consistent effects, such as a zoom, to every clip in the group, without the need for tedious manual edits
- We can add our group to the library as though it were a single asset
- If the clips are on different timeline tracks, grouping shifts them all onto one track, freeing up the timeline tracks for other items

Before creating a group, we should ensure that all of the items are edited and presented exactly as we want them to be in the final video. Grouping can be undone, but it is a far more effective technique if we are confident that the items are in a finished state first.
Creating More Complex Video Sequences

How to create a group
Take the following steps to create a group:

1. Hold Shift and select each item to group.
2. Right-click on an item.
3. Click on Group. The items are grouped as shown in the following screenshot:

![Grouped items in timeline](image)

When we split any grouped items in the timeline, the split is applied to the entire group.

How to ungroup
Take the following steps to ungroup a group:

1. Right-click on the group.
2. Click on Ungroup.

Interactive quizzes
In Camtasia Studio, we can add quiz questions to our video.

Quizzes have a number of functions:

- They encourage the viewer to digest the information on-screen
- They assist active learners by making presentations more interactive
- They can be used to repeat sections that a viewer has not fully absorbed
- They can turn video content into true training material

To create a quiz in a video, we must ensure that our video meets particular requirements. Our Camtasia Studio project must be at least 640 pixels wide and 480 pixels high, and it must be published as an .mp4 file with the Flash/HTML5 output option. We will discuss output file types further in Chapter 5, Publishing Tips and Techniques.
Creating quizzes

We can add any number of quizzes to the video. However, we must take care to be concise with our questions. A quiz is essentially a distraction from the video content; too many questions can break the flow of a video. A quiz should normally be used for revising a passage or verifying essential knowledge.

If we want to include a larger and more comprehensive quiz, it is better to place it at the end of the video.

It is normally best to integrate quiz questions when the rest of the video content is complete and in a finished, edited state. Otherwise, the quiz will need to be continuously adapted as we edit, which can waste time.

Quizzes can be linked to a point on the timeline or a specific point on a clip. These are called a Timeline quiz and a Media quiz. If we add a Media quiz to a clip, the quiz will be will be moved along the timeline if the clip is moved.

Before we begin to add questions to our video, we must switch on Quiz View in the timeline. To do this, navigate to View | Show Quiz View. This creates a space for quiz questions above the timeline and above each track, as shown in the following screenshot:
How to add a quiz

Take the following steps to add a quiz:

1. Select the point to add the quiz to.

   There is a small gap above the timeline. If we hover the mouse over this gap, a red line and a diamond will be displayed where the timeline quiz will be added.

   A small gap also appears above each media clip. If we hover the mouse over this gap, a pink line and a diamond will be displayed. This is where we can add a media quiz.

2. Click the diamond at the position where we want to add the quiz. The diamond turns yellow and a set of quiz questions is added. The next screenshot shows a question added to a media clip.
Quiz questions

Each time we add a quiz question to the timeline, we can define the properties for that quiz question in the Quiz options dialog box. This includes selecting whether the quiz will be scored and whether the participant can see his/her result.

We can ask four different types of questions:

- Multiple choice
- Fill in the blank
- Short answer
- True or false

After selecting the type, we can set the question and define the correct answer. After creating our quiz we can preview and test it, as shown in the following screenshot:
About quiz scores
We can collect the results from our quiz and employ the user’s scores in other applications.

Collecting scores in this way is entirely optional, but can be useful when producing training videos, or when creating any video where we need to ensure the viewer achieved a particular pass mark.

If we decide that we want to save quiz results for analysis, Camtasia Studio allows us to choose two different types of export in the Production Wizard: SCORM or e-mail report.

Receiving scores via SCORM
SCORM stands for Shareable Content Object Reference Model. It is a protocol used in a range of Learning Management Systems (LMS), such as Moodle.

Camtasia Studio can export quiz scores as a SCORM content package. If we are already using a third-party e-learning application, it makes sense to use the SCORM format to seamlessly transfer scores from our video to our e-learning application.

Camtasia Studio allows us to set additional SCORM metadata, such as the course title, during the production process. Depending on the third-party application we are using, this information may not be carried over correctly. It is worth testing your SCORM export prior to releasing the video to trainees or students to ensure the data is being transferred as expected.

Receiving scores via e-mail reports
If we are not using an LMS, it is preferable to receive quiz results via e-mail.

We can ask viewers to supply their name and e-mail address or submit their responses anonymously. We can also customize the email address that the quiz result reports are sent.

The user does not need to manually intervene in the sending of the e-mail report. Camtasia Studio collects the viewer’s score, formats their responses, and sends the resulting data via e-mail.
The system compiles one e-mail report every 24 hours to avoid flooding the recipient's inbox with quiz responses.

If e-mail reports do not appear to be working, it may be necessary to check our Junk or Spam e-mail folder.

Summary

In this chapter, we have looked at more advanced editing techniques. These will help us to lengthen, streamline, and improve our Camtasia Studio projects as they grow.

We have added interactivity to videos and covered ways to make editing long videos more practical and efficient. Provided we structure and plan long videos properly, these tips help to make large projects far more manageable.

In the next chapter, we will look at ways to produce and publish our finished video.
After perfecting a video in Camtasia Studio, we must publish it so that it can be distributed and viewed by our intended audience.

Camtasia Studio has an extremely versatile suite of publishing settings. As video editors, we have the freedom to choose the most appropriate export format, settings, and destination.

As discussed in Chapter 1, Obtaining Quality Source Material, we should already have taken some time to think about our canvas dimensions, as this dictates the size of the finished video. We have considered how our audience will be watching the video, where they will be watching it, and the devices they might be using. The more effective the preparation, the easier the publishing will be.

This chapter covers best-practice guidelines on exporting video effectively. It describes how to avoid problems with resolution, which is a common issue. We will look at creating our own custom production settings as well as using the preset settings for YouTube and Screencast.com. In addition to this, we will briefly look at common problems that users encounter when exporting video to major video sites such as YouTube.

Before we publish our video

There are two steps to getting our video to our viewers: production and publishing. It is important that the production stage is entirely complete before we move on to publishing.
Reviewing a video takes time, and it may require repeated and detailed viewings. But after a video is published, there is no going back, so it is crucial to ensure there are no tiny flaws or mistakes that would force us to revisit the production stage.

Some options in Camtasia Studio allow us to produce and publish at the same time. While this is a convenient way to export video quickly, it is good practice to test the video thoroughly before it is published; particularly if it will be exported to the web.

There are several questions we should ask when reviewing our Camtasia Studio video:

- **Does the video progress at a steady and easily digestible pace?** This can be difficult to gauge after working on a video for an extended period. For an impartial opinion, we could ask a colleague or friend to watch the video and provide feedback on its pace and timing.
- **Are our captions clearly visible and easy to follow?** Again, we could ask a colleague or friend to review the captions and pick out any grammar or spelling mistakes.
- **Do narration, textboxes, and callouts fade in and out at the correct places?** Fades should be consistent, smooth, and timed precisely. Callouts should stay on screen long enough for the reader to absorb the detail, but without obscuring key elements in the video underneath.
- **Are our hotspots working correctly?** Review all links and buttons to ensure the viewer is taken to the intended destinations. Remember that some viewers may interact with a hotspot using a touchscreen, so the hotspot area should be big enough to accommodate a tap.
- **Does the quiz work as intended?** Run through the quiz several times, providing both right and wrong answers. Ensure quiz scores are captured, reported, and transmitted correctly.

**Production options**

In Camtasia Studio, there is a wide range of production presets. These presets are great when we need to quickly finalize a video.

With practice and experience, we will most certainly prefer to create our own unique publishing settings to give our series of videos their own identity.
There are three types of production options in Camtasia Studio:

- **External websites**: Camtasia provides two preconfigured production settings to allow us to produce and publish our videos to YouTube or Screencast.com, TechSmith's own video site.

- **Standard video**: There are four preconfigured settings for producing standard video files with or without the video player. These are stored in a Camtasia folder in our hard drive and have to be published outside Camtasia Studio. These video types are ideal for testing our content before we publish it.

- **Customized video**: This allows us to create our own customized video output that can be published, saved, and reused when we produce more videos.

When we begin the produce and share process, we can choose which production option we wish to use. This is done in **Production Wizard**, as shown in the following screenshot:
Publishing Tips and Techniques

While publishing videos, consider the needs of the audience. It makes sense to publish all of your videos on the same website so that they are easy to find and share. This is a crucial consideration if you plan to promote your videos on social media.

Videos can be published to multiple formats in order to meet the needs of different groups of viewers.

Publishing to YouTube

YouTube provides a quick and easy storage space for videos, and it's probably the most popular export option in Camtasia Studio.

Before publishing content to YouTube, consider the pros and cons of this feature.

The pros of publishing content on YouTube are as follows:

- As one of the biggest video hosting sites in the world, many people will already be familiar with YouTube. It is also technically the second largest search engine on the web, so the amount of exposure videos get is considerable.
- YouTube users can create a channel to make theming and organization easy. Videos can be arranged in playlists or promoted via special brand channels. We can also optionally monetize our video content on YouTube.
- We can customize every aspect of the video. For example, we can create custom thumbnails to make content more prominent.

The cons of publishing content on YouTube are follows:

- The YouTube video player does not support hotspots or quizzes, so it is not suitable for e-learning content with interactive elements.
- We may want to reserve the videos for our work colleagues only. While YouTube has some privacy settings, an alternative option may be preferable and easier to manage. We could consider our company intranet or a private cloud storage solution.
- As YouTube is blocked by some system administrators, the content may not be accessible.
How to produce and publish a video to YouTube

Perform the following steps to produce and share our video to YouTube:

1. Click on File | Produce and Share.... The Production Wizard window is displayed.
2. Select Share to YouTube from the drop-down list.
3. Click on Next.
4. Enter a YouTube account username and password to log in. The username and password are essential; we cannot progress without an account.
5. Click on Next.
6. Type in the YouTube video details, as shown in the next screenshot:

   - The title is displayed with the video. This is included in web searches, so ensure you include keywords in your video title for search engine optimization. Google prominently displays YouTube videos in its search results.
Remember that not everyone is an expert in getting around YouTube and finding the content they are looking for. We can spend a lot of time creating a well-organized channel with playlists and branding that will help people find our content. But some visitors will rely solely on search, and that means optimization is key.

° The description is also displayed with the video and the first few lines are shown in Google search results. Keep it short, concise, and easy for people to skim-read. Again, it is a good idea to include keywords in your YouTube video description.

° YouTube tags help viewers to find the content they need based on topics or themes. Use keywords in your tags, but make them quite specific to a niche. Think about what our viewers might be typing in when they search for the video.

° The category is self-explanatory in most cases. We should make sure each video in the series is filed under the appropriate category. In many cases, this will be the same for all of our videos in the series.

° There are three privacy settings for videos on YouTube: Private, Unlisted, and Public. Public videos can be found and watched by anyone. Private videos are only visible to those we choose, but these people must have a Google+ account, so this option is not always desirable for corporate videos. The final option, Unlisted, can be applied after the video is uploaded. This makes the video invisible to searches but visible to anyone with the link, regardless of whether they have a Google+ account.

° Check the **Upload captions** field if there are any captions in the video. This will synchronize the captions with the YouTube captions feature. YouTube captions are searchable, and they are also a crucial aid to disabled and deaf users. We can also use the YouTube automatic translation feature to convert our captions to 139 languages, broadening its exposure.

7. Click on **Finish**. The video is produced and uploaded to YouTube.
Publishing to Screencast.com

Screencast.com is TechSmith's own video hosting site. Customers can sign up for a small amount of storage space for free, and there is an option to extend the amount of storage space for a small fee.

Just as with YouTube, there are pros and cons to using Screencast.com to host your videos.

The pros of publishing content on Screencast.com are as follows:

- The Screencast.com video player supports all of the features that Camtasia Studio can create, including advanced features, for example, quizzes. This allows for more flexibility and customization.
- Screencast.com is a good alternative to YouTube, if we do not have our own intranet site and are not concerned about reaching the wider public or appearing in a search. The site also allows us to password-protect our videos if we need to keep them private; this can be achieved without requiring our users to sign up for an account.
- Screencast.com makes it easy to organize and share a video library with specific groups such as different customers, staff, or the public.

The cons of publishing content on Screencast.com are as follows:

- The site does not have the same reach as YouTube, so our videos will almost certainly not gain the same level of exposure.
- We may have to pay for more storage space if we intend to upload more videos in the series. Otherwise, once we run out of space, we will need to find an alternative hosting solution.
- We cannot create our own channels in the same way we can create a YouTube channel.

How to produce and publish a video to Screencast.com

Perform the following steps to produce and share our video to Screencast.com.

1. Click on File | Produce and Share..., so the Production Wizard window is displayed.
2. Select Share to Screencast.com from the drop-down list.
3. Click on Next.
4. Enter a Screencast.com account username and password to log in. The username and password are essential; we cannot progress without an account.
5. Click on Next.
6. Type in the Screencast.com video details, as shown in the following screenshot:

- The video title is a good way to link multiple videos into a single series. If we have a video series using a common name, for example, Camtasia Book Series 1: Episode…, it can help viewers find the next video in the Screencast folder.
- The Screencast.com folder controls who can view the video; permissions are inherited. Selecting or creating the appropriate folder here is a useful way to save time when organizing videos and determining who can view them.
- The Options... menu here offers a degree of customization and control over the video player. We will look at these in more detail in the Custom Publishing Settings section of this chapter.
7. Click on **Finish**. The video is uploaded to Screencast.com. We are then provided with some additional sharing options, as shown in the next screenshot.

![Screencast.com Upload Results]

- The video URL can be copied to the clipboard using the **Copy** button. We can then paste the link into an e-mail, forum post, social media post, or other resources. However, it is important to remember the security settings we have within the folder we have uploaded the video to, as these ultimately determine who can view the video.
The Embed code option allows us to instantly embed the video and video player directly on a website, newsletter, or similar resources. Note that the height and width can be modified, but we must take care to modify them proportionally, so that the video does not appear to be stretched or distorted.

8. Click on Finish.

**Standard video**

The four standard video export options offer a quick and easy solution for producing a video. These settings allow us to create our video files without publishing them to a specific space for viewing. We literally create the video file(s); the publishing may be triggered at a later date.

Exporting a video in this way is ideal if you wish to produce a video for distribution. The exported file is a standard MP4 file, which will be accessible by most users and compatible with most devices.

The options for the MP4 export are based on two settings:

- High Definition (HD) video
- Video player included

**When to use HD**

As the web has become more advanced, video has become an increasingly important medium for content delivery.

The devices we use to consume video are also becoming more sophisticated; desktop and laptop computers are capable of rendering HD video, and many mobile devices are now catching up, with most high-end smartphones having HD screens.

In addition, the arrival of faster Wi-Fi and mobile networks, and the falling cost of bandwidth and storage means, file size is rarely an issue.

When exporting a video, it is therefore almost always worth exporting it as an HD file. There may be rare occasions where storage space or bandwidth is restricted; in that case, we can export a second version in a lower quality or convert our HD version using a third-party video conversion tool such as SUPER, FFmpeg, or Handbrake.
Video player or no video player?
Camtasia Studio can produce a video with or without its video player. The inclusion of the video player allows us to use any feature in Camtasia Studio for our videos; it provides complete compatibility and ensures everything we have embedded into the video will work as intended.

If we publish our video with a video player, then we will know that all of our hotspots, captions, quizzes, and other interactive features will work, and this cuts down the amount of time needed for testing.

However, there are some problems:

• Producing the video player alongside the video will significantly increase the size of the video export. Instead of creating a single MP4 file, multiple files are produced. These files will all need to be published in order for the viewer to watch the video.

• If there are any problems with the player, it will be inconvenient for the viewer and could hinder their ability to watch the video. For example, there may be an issue with browser compatibility or security that prevents the player from working correctly.

• The player clearly cannot be used on popular sites such as YouTube, so its usefulness is restricted to particular scenarios, for example, web publishing on our own site.

Custom publishing settings
Creating our own production settings is a great way to add our own identity to Camtasia Studio videos, particularly if a video is part of a series.

Custom publishing settings are also ideal for branding.

By creating a production profile, we can set up our video with particular presets, and then reuse this profile every time we publish a video.

We can also create multiple production profiles to serve different purposes:

• We may want a customer-facing profile and an internal profile
• We may want a separate profile, specifically for embedding videos in newsletters
• We could create a profile for YouTube, social media, or our own blog

We should ensure that we take the time to think through our publishing needs and create production profiles to suit their needs.
Output file formats
Camtasia Studio can export video content in a number of useful file formats:

- **WMV**: This is a native video format for the Windows operating system. If we know that the majority of our viewers are using Windows PCs, choosing WMV will ensure compatibility.

- **MOV**: This is the native video format for Apple Macintosh computers. It is not widely supported on Windows PCs and would require our viewers to install the QuickTime software. In some corporate environments, installing software on Windows PCs is prohibited, so this is worth considering in advance.

- **AVI**: This is a popular format but its large file size means it is more suitable for archiving than distribution.

- **MV4**: This format is designed for small videos. It works with QuickTime and is suitable for some Apple devices. It is compatible with some older iPods, iPads, and iPhones, but it is being replaced by the MP4 file format.

- **MP4**: This format is widely supported across desktop and mobile platforms, and it combines high quality with a small file size.

- **MP3**: This is an audio output only. This can turn Camtasia Studio into a tool for creating sound bites and podcasts.

- **GIF**: These are image files and Camtasia Studio can export animated GIFs (short animated images). They do not include audio and the final quality is low, but the file size is small. These can be used to create an animated company logo, or other simple silent clips, that you can embed in online communications.

How to create a publishing profile
Perform the following steps to create a publishing profile:

1. Click on **File | Produce and Share….** The **Production Wizard** window is displayed.
2. Select **Custom production settings** from the drop-down list.
3. Click on **Next**.
4. Select a file format.

Each file type will present different publishing options. We normally find that MP4 gives the greatest degree of flexibility.
5. Click on **Next**.

In the next few screenshots, we will look at the video player options for the MP4 file format.

6. Set the **Controller** options for the video, as shown in the following screenshot:

- Ticking **Produce with controller** will create an export that includes the video file and the controller bar at the bottom. We can then set the additional player options, such as the **Auto-hide controls** feature and the **Pause at start** feature.
- We can choose from several controller themes. The selected theme is displayed below the player options panel. We should try to ensure all of our videos use the same controller theme to ensure that our videos maintain a consistent appearance.
The **After video** drop-down list allows us to control what happens after the video is played to the end. Using **Go to URL** here is a useful way of driving traffic to additional content. For example, if we have created a help video on a particular topic, we may want to immediately forward our viewers to corresponding online help documentation.

The **Start thumbnail** option allows us to choose a specific file for the video thumbnail image. While it is tempting to let Camtasia Studio automatically choose the thumbnail, it is far better to choose a specific file so that the video is instantly recognizable.

7. Set the output **Size**, as shown in the following screenshot:
We should already have thought about our video size; this was part of the planning process. Again, we should try to maintain a consistent size for all of our videos.

The **Embed size** fields allow to specify how large our video will be if we embed it in a web page. When choosing the size in these fields, we should consider where the video is going to be published. For example, if we are planning to embed the video in a newsletter, we should make sure it is not too large to fit in an e-mail.

If we plan to embed the video in a variety of places, we should set the embed size to the smallest size that we will need.

8. Set the **Video settings**, as shown in the next screenshot:
° We should already have decided the **Frame rate** and can set it here. For most purposes, **Automatic** is suitable.

° The **Encoding mode** drop-down list and slider allows us to control the quality of the video output. The higher the quality or bit rate, the larger the file will be.

° Keyframes are a form of index frame. They display where the video is when the viewer is forwarding or rewinding the video. The higher the amount of keyframes, the larger the file size will be.

° The **H.264** profile is related to how the video is encoded. We should stick to the **Baseline** profile and auto level where possible. The **Main** and **High** profiles are more useful for TV and HDTV broadcasts and could result in a far bigger file than is necessary.

° We can choose to split our video into multiple files based on any markers we have inserted. This is useful if our MP4 files are expected to be large and we want to split them into smaller chunks.

9. Set the **Audio settings**, as shown in the next screenshot.
We should have already decided the bit rate for our audio and can set it here. The suggested setting, **128 kbps**, results in CD quality audio. This is normally sufficient.

10. Set the **Options** if we are producing the video with the controller. This allows us to include non-standard features that are specific to Camtasia Studio, such as captions, quizzes, and a table of contents, as shown in the following screenshot:
11. Click on Next. The Video Options section is displayed, as shown in the following screenshot:

- We can add video info. This enables us to set project information, such as categories, keywords, and descriptions, that are useful for online searches. We can input author information and information to allow the video to be published to iTunes.

- We can also add a Watermark to the video. This can be positioned and edited to suit our needs.

- We can also set some Reporting options and add an HTML title to our video.
12. Click on **Next**, continue through the Production Wizard process, and set the rest of the output options, such as additional options for features such as quiz result reports and the table of contents. Many of these options will depend on what features we have added to the video.

13. On the final page, click on **Finish**. If we are uploading a video via FTP, we will be prompted to log in to the FTP server before the video is rendered. We can also save an FTP profile for future use.

**How to create a production preset**

After we have rendered a video using a customized publishing profile, we should save it as a preset for future videos. This makes sure that all of our videos maintain the same look and feel.

1. After the video has rendered, the production report is displayed, as shown in the next screenshot.
2. Click on **Create production preset**.
3. Input the name and details for the preset.
4. Click on **OK**. The settings are saved as a preset and can be selected when we begin the production process.

**Summary**

In this chapter, we looked in detail at the publishing and production features in Camtasia Studio. We discussed the pros and cons of different output formats and discussed the need for HD video. We also looked at the advantages and disadvantages of different publishing destinations and have learned how to create a custom production preset to save time.
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