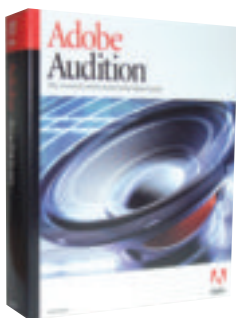


TEST

ADOBE ADOBE AUDITION

# ADOBE Adobe Audition 1.5

Cool Edit Pro is no more, but the package has been rescued and re-branded by Adobe. **Hollin Jones** finds out if it he can pass the Audition...



FOR PC

#### ADOBE AUDITION

Manufacturer **Adobe**

Price **£246**

**Owners of Cool Edit Pro 1.x or Cool Edit 2000 can upgrade for £82; owners of Cool Edit Pro 2.x can upgrade for £23**

Contact **Adobe**

**0870 606 0325**

**www.adobe.co.uk**

**A**dobe has long been known as a maker of leading graphics and video software, but although its products incorporated some audio features, it never included a dedicated audio-editing package. When Syntrillium Software disappeared in 2003, Adobe seized the opportunity to acquire its renowned audio editing software for PC, Cool Edit Pro.

With a few tweaks and a minor facelift, it was re-released in August 2003 as Adobe Audition and billed as a tool for audio and video professionals in studios, broadcast facilities and post-production houses. Audition is principally a waveform editor, although it has some other neat features more akin to music sequencers than traditional audio editors.

#### Look and feel

Audition is graphically more appealing than many audio-editing packages on the PC, using its own themes and colours rather than Windows defaults. One of the first things you notice is how easy it is to customise the program. Practically every window can be moved, docked or separated, enabling you to set it up just as you want. If you have multiple monitors this is really useful as it reduces the need for scrolling.

There are two main modes – Edit and Multitrack – and menus are



**A** Audition features multitrack recording and editing, and is capable of importing video files.

contextual depending on which mode you're in. Many functions are accessed by right-clicking on elements on the screen. It soon becomes apparent that wave and sample editing – as well as some effects processing – is done in Edit mode, and any layering, sequencing and looping in Multitrack mode.

save out a new copy of the video with the new soundtrack. Surprisingly, only .AVI movies are supported for video import and export; QuickTime and WMV files don't get a look in.

#### The full effect

In Multitrack mode, Audition behaves in a similar fashion to a music

## Audition is a powerful wave editor that will encourage you to stray into the world of music creation.

There's a window on the left (unless you move it) which acts as a sort of 'bin' where all used audio files, effects and favourites are accessible. Adobe calls it the Organizer window, and it's much like the project bin found in many video applications.

Audition supports the import of many audio formats including Amiga IFF, Apple AIFF, multiple types of .WAV files, MP3, WMA and .au files – among others. It can also import MIDI files and supports the control of external MIDI devices via a compatible MIDI interface.

As a nod to the video editors there's also the option to import video files, although only one video track per project is supported. The video window is scalable and can be docked anywhere and still display properly. Right-clicking on the video track (displayed as a filmstrip) and selecting Save Mixdown to Video will

sequencer, supporting up to 128 audio tracks. Each has a Record, Solo and Mute button, and can be set to record from any sound input. Volume, EQ and Buss controls are accessed via three tabs at the top of the track display strip. Effects shown up in white can be applied non-destructively in real time by dragging and dropping onto the audio track, whereupon the relevant effect window will open, enabling settings to be made, presets stored and so on.

Audition uses an effects-rack analogy for each track, where clicking on the Rack Setup button or right-clicking and selecting Rack Settings will open a window that enables you to create effects chains and store them as presets if you wish. The rather basic 'Windows file browser' look of the effects rack is disappointing, but it does its job.

#### RELATED TECHNOLOGY Highly Original

**A new feature in Audition, added since its acquisition by Adobe, is the Edit Original command. When saving files or projects, Project Link data is embedded in the files so that if they are used in other Adobe programs such as Premiere or After Effects, an option will become available to edit the original file. When selected, this will open Audition and recall any specific settings you made, obviating the need to export files between programs. When you have finished editing the file it is automatically updated in the program you were working in. In a professional environment this can save a lot of time messing about with files.**



Audition can use any DirectX effects installed on your system, and almost all of these seem to be real-time compatible. There's no native VST support, although using a VST-to-DX adaptor should get around this problem. Of particular interest are the noise reduction effects. Hiss and Hum reduction does what it says on the tin, and Clip Restoration identifies occurrences of clipping in a file and repairs them – especially useful for plosives and sibilance in vocals. The Click/Pop eliminator is designed for cleaning up old vinyl recordings that have been digitised, eliminating crackle but leaving the music intact.

Audition includes more than 45 DSP effects, mastering and analysis tools, incorporating all the features you'd expect from a professional wave editor. There are also some handy tools such as a batch format converter and a scriptable batch processor which works like Actions in Adobe's Photoshop.

### Round and round

Where Audition differs from other wave editors is firstly in its multi-channel sequencing capability, but also in that it supports easy looping and loop creation. Right-clicking on an audio block in Multichannel view enables you to set the Loop properties for that file, including whether the file can be looped, how it should be looped, and what kind of timestretching (if any) should be applied. Back in Multichannel view you can choose to duplicate the loop or just drag it out on the timeline, and Audition will repeat it for you. Features such as tempo matching and beat detection make this process smoother.

#### METHOD SPOT

### In the loop

Unlike many wave-editing packages, Audition features comprehensive looping tools and is supplied with a CD of royalty-free loops. To quickly paint a loop into a track, simply click the bottom-right corner of a waveform in Multitrack View and drag it over time.



In Edit mode you can perform traditional, sample-accurate editing of waveforms.

Audition is supplied with a CD of ready-made loops, grouped by style in the proprietary .cel format. There are over 4,500 of them, in fact. Rather like the loops that ship with Reason, they're a good start, and great for those new to creating backing tracks. The ability to paint loops in like this is reminiscent of Acid or Apple's Soundtrack, and gives Audition an edge over other wave editors.

Finally, and rather hidden away, is Audition's multi-channel encoder. It's surprisingly easy to assign different tracks from your project to different surround channels, select from various presets, preview and then export your file. Three export formats for surround are supported: WMA Pro 9 multi-channel files; an interleaved six-channel .WAV file; or six separate Mono Wave files. 5:1 sound is also supported, which should be enough for most users.

### Taking the Audition?

Although Audition isn't greatly different from the version of Cool Edit Pro that it supersedes, it's still a very solid audio package, and users of Cool Edit will find it an easy step to move to this new program. Although some of the

buttons are a little mystifying at first glance, the overall user experience is a good one. The customisable interface is handy and the Organizer window makes keeping track of projects simpler. All the features you'd expect from a wave editor are there: crossfades, sample-accurate editing, mastering tools, batch processing, CD ripping and so on.

But it's the more musical features that makes Audition stand out: support for external MIDI devices, metronome, looping and beat detection to name but a few. It may not replace your copy of Cubase, but these features give you more flexibility. Integration with Adobe's video products, SMPTE support and the supplied loop library will keep video editors happy too.

Audition is a powerful wave editor that will encourage you to stray into the world of music creation and music-to-picture. **MTM**

## SUMMARY

### MINIMUM SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

- 400MHz processor (2GHz or faster recommended)
- Windows 98/SE/ME/2000 or XP
- 64MB RAM (512MB or more recommended)
- 55MB hard disk space (500MB recommended for installing optional audio clips)
- 800x600 colour display (1,024x768 display recommended)

### KEY FEATURES

- Up to 32-bit, 192kHz operation
- Support for multiple audio file formats
- DSP effects, DirectX support
- Customisable interface
- Multi-channel encoder
- Loop-based music creation
- Video support
- Integration with other Adobe products

### WHY BUY

- Powerful wave editor
- Compatible with many audio formats
- Highly customisable interface
- Loop function and supplied loop content
- Batch processing and video support
- Metronome, MIDI support, Multi-track sequencing

### WALK ON BY

- No native VST support
- Only .AVI video format supported
- No native CD-burning capability
- AC3 and DTS surround output would be nice

## VERDICT

A solid and accomplished wave editing package with enough extra features to satisfy musicians and editors.



## The Adobe Audition interface.

Your at-a-glance guide to the Adobe Audition control panel.

This button switches between Multitrack mode and Edit mode.

The toolbar contains all the controls for managing and navigating sounds.

Import and manage audio files with the File Browser.

The Transport panel contains Play and Record controls.

Loops can be imported, edited and dragged out over time.

Each track has Record, Solo and Mute buttons.

Monitor the volume of mixes with the master level meter.

Set tempo, time signatures and keys here.