

Monday, November 26, 2007

Teacher Resources

Free Camtasia Studio: Create your Own Desktop Videos

Desktop video is one area where existing Open Source software doesn't measure up to the commercial version. And, the "king" of commercial video creation software is Camtasia Studio. Sidebar Camtasia Studio is also much better than Microsoft's free Movie Maker software that is a free download for Windows Xp. Link to the Microsoft Movie Maker Download Page

Now, teachers can receive a fully functional (previous version, Version 3.1.3) of Camtasia Studio for free! There is no telling how long TechSmith, the makers of Camtasia Studio, will keep this offer online, so act fast. Sidebar Note: Classroom Toolkit is taking the unusual step of publishing this article early so that our readers can take advantage of this TechSmith offer. Our online strategy is to publish articles that are organized in a magazine-type collection once a month. However, this offer is too good for teachers to wait. TechSmith may pull this offer before the end of the month. We will also publish an article related to this free Camtasia offer in our Open Source for Education, section of the Classroom Toolkit 11-30-07 newsletter. This article explores the reason that your school district's IT Department can't take advantage of this free Camtasia offer and the reason that free Open Source software "seldom flies" in a school district network environment, either. Previous Camtasia Version: No Problem Even though this free version is an older version of the software, it is still superior to any available Open Source desktop video product.

Of course, TechSmith would like you to upgrade to the current version, Camtasia 5.0. And, TechSmith is offering an upgrade to this trial version for half-price, \$149.00 USD. Action Steps Here are the steps that you need to take to grab this offer and

1. Download Camtasia Trial Version
Download the 30-day trial to Camtasia v. 3.1.3
2. Install the Trial software on the computer of your choice
3. Request the Registration that will allow the software to "run forever," i.e., turn the trial version into a full version
Obtain a Registration Key (Note: You have to provide an E-mail address.)
4. Visit TechSmith's Educational Resources Page

TechSmith's Educational Video Resources
5. Create your instructional videos
Fantastic Offer: The software license key that TechSmith sends you turns the evaluation copy that you download for free into a fully licensed version.

At the same time, TechSmith offers you a chance to upgrade the license for a the newest version at 50% off the new version (Camtasia Suite 5.0).

Upgrade Link: \$149.00 USD

(Note: This upgrade price beats the "Education Version pricing," and provides the full commercial license to this product.

Education Price: \$179.00 USD.) System Requirements It is applications such as Camtasia Studio that keep Apple and Linux from making headway in their competition with the Windows operating system. Of course, Apple provides its own free Audio and Video software, but Apple computers cost more.

Sidebar Contrary to what Apple and Linux supporters tell themselves, and would like to believe; i.e., that the education market drives the computer software industry; business and home users are really the engines of computer operating system marketing. Apple needs to provide better business applications at a lower price point, and Linux needs to be easier to use and needs to run Windows applications in a seamless way. Note: Apple computers run an application called Parallels, that does an outstanding job of running Windows applications on the Mac. Of course, Apple computers are superior for desktop video and movie production.

However, one application for Camtasia videos is to capture Windows desktop images to demonstrate how technology can be integrated into your curriculum. If your school district provides Apple computers for teacher and student use, then you don't need Camtasia Studio. Microsoft Windows XP or Windows Vista

Microsoft DirectX 9 or later version

1.0 GHz processor minimum ~ Recommended: 2.5 GHz (for PowerPoint and camera recordings.)

500 MB RAM minimum ~ Recommended: 1.0 GB

60 MB of hard-disk space for program installation

Optional: Camtasia Studio Add-in for Power Point requires PowerPoint 2000, 2002, 2003, or 2007

Optional: Production to the Apple iPod format requires Apple QuickTime 7.1 or later

Optional: Windows-compatible sound card, microphone and speakers (recommended)

Optional: Camera video recording requires a USB Camera. Digital video (DV) cameras are not supported. USB Web camera

Benefits of Camtasia®; (Either Version)

- Simplifies video for distance learning
- Improves online content creation. You can post these videos on a Website or burn them to CD/ DVDs
- Enhances classroom presentations. You can create video handouts and take home multimedia lessons
- Strengthens teacher training. Workshop and Training program Follow-up procedures can be posted for online viewing or downloading
- Great for technology integration
- Super for Computer Lab demonstrations and student self-help FAQs
- Wonderful for student learning centers

Features of the Latest Version Unless your Classroom is "High Tech" (or you are a Curriculum Specialist, Trainer or Webmaster); you won't need these latest features.

And, although there is a learning curve, it is not as steep as with many other high-end software products. (TechSmith®; also provides Camtasia®; video tutorials to get you "up and running" quickly.

Sidebar Link to the TechSmith®; Learning Center

Camtasia®; Studio publishes videos and MP3 files for portable media players - even the iPod. It enables you to share videos with anyone, even with the use of Flash"

You achieve this miracle by being able to record anything on your computer monitor screen, including narrated PowerPoint®; slides and web cam video. Then, you can even edit multiple audio tracks, reduce background noise and equalize volume on these tracks.

The new version has a the ability to "AutoZoom" to investigate sections of the screen in greater detail…great for demonstrations.

There is also the ability to create interactive videos that can contain surveys and quizzes. The interactive videos can also contain "hot spots" that launch programs and Websites.

Work During the Holidays? Sidebar

Creating instruct videos might be a "fun" way to spend your Winter Solstice Break (Note: Politically correct phrase for those or you who work in a school district that has outlawed the use of the term "Christmas.")

Of course, district administrators haven't figured out that celebrating a Winter Solstice (while deprecating Christmas, Hanukah, Ramadan and Kwanza), honors a Druid and Wicca (Witchcraft) religious celebration.

Perhaps, in the current politically correct climate, "Freedom of Religion" means the freedom to practice nothing unless that practice is conducted "underground."

Note of the Note: These comments are a way that you can tell that this newsletter article is not an ad for Techsmith®; but a helpful message for teachers. Advertisers would never risk alienating anyone by their insightful comments, and always keep their hype inane. Here, at Classroom Toolkit, we "Tell it like it is."

And anyone that doesn't take advantage of this TechSmith®; offer because of our comments loses out. So, take advantage of this offer from TechSmith®;, no matter what you think of our views.)

Posted by Classroom Toolkit Newsletter in Teacher Resources at 05:00