Using Camtasia Studio

A Tutorial for Creating Simple Screencasts
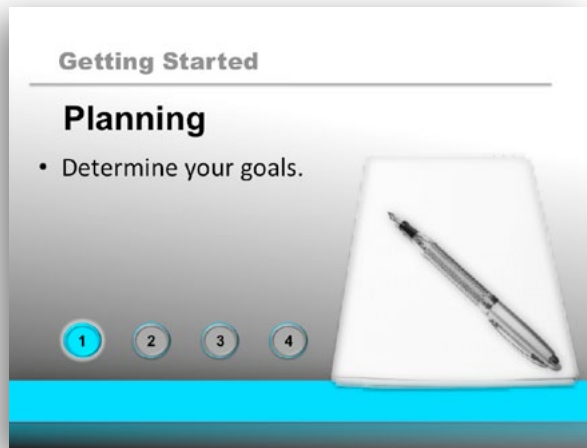
Getting Started

Planning + Setting the Stage

This may seem too obvious to mention, but it's essential that you know before you begin what you want to accomplish through your screencast. Are you demonstrating a process, influencing opinion on a topic, or increasing awareness about an issue?

A key part of determining your goals is knowing your audience. The more you know about them, their backgrounds, previous experiences, skill levels, motivators, and personal goals, the better you can tailor what you present and how you approach it.

Thinking in terms of an introduction, body, and closing summary will help you structure an effective screencast. Once you know the content that will make up each of these main sections, plan on letting your video do much of the talking for you. The ability of your audience to see what you are describing is, as the expression goes, "worth a thousand words."

Use your narration to fill in details about what you are doing that will improve the viewer's understanding without distracting them from what they are watching you do.

You can make a script or a storyboard as simple or detailed as you like. The important thing is that you think through, in detail, the information that you want to cover in your screencast.
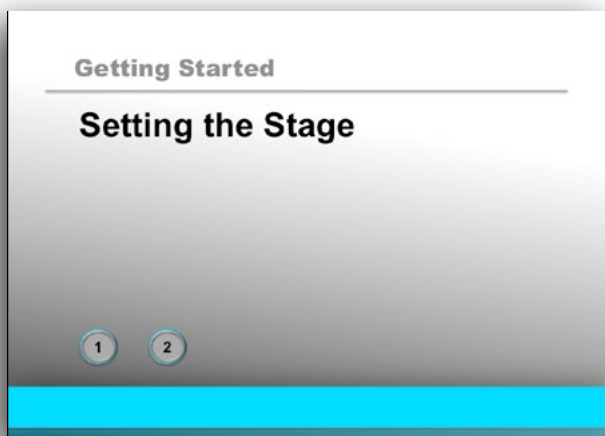
Give some thought to how you will tell the story of what you need to convey and put it in writing in some form. This will be an important tool when you are capturing your screencast and will help your work be more thorough and well organized.
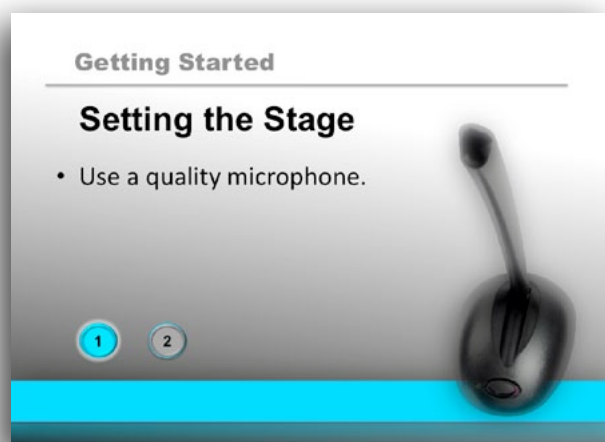
You will likely need a few practice attempts before you begin capturing your screen. Talk your way through your script from beginning to end and ask yourself if you have covered everything that you need to show. Do your comments flow well and complement what you will be demonstrating?

Advance practice will help you iron out any major concerns and ensure that the pace of your screencast moves quickly enough to keep your viewers engaged without rushing through important details.

It's important to note that Camtasia allows you to add your narration after you have captured the screencast, but the more thoroughly you work through ahead of time what you are going to say, the better. You don't want to discover after you're done that you failed to demonstrate in the screencast a key point that you intend to cover in your narration. Advance practice will help both the pace and consistency of your message.

Now that you've planned your goals for your screencast, developed a script or storyboard as a guide and practiced what you are going to do and say, there are just a few remaining things to do to get the stage, in this case your computer itself, ready for a successful screen capture.

If possible, use a microphone other than the one built into your computer. Select an external microphone that fits your work surface correctly and allows you to place it close enough for it to pick up your voice while allowing you to sit comfortably. Make sure that when you are ready to record that you are in a quiet location. Minimizing any background noise is an important start to good audio in your screencast.

Getting Started

Setting the Stage

• Clean up a busy or cluttered computer desktop and get the resources ready that you will need.

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Take a look at your desktop. Are there things that might distract your audience from where you want their attention focused? Get your desktop ready by closing or minimizing unnecessary programs or Web pages and have open and ready only those programs or pages you will need for your screencast. Also, don't forget to turn off any schedule reminders or email alerts that might pop up during your screencast.
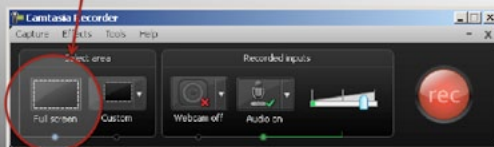
Capturing
the Screen

This section will show you how to begin your screen capture, which begins with opening the Camtasia Studio software. Once it is open, select the "Record Screen" option from the toolbar.

Once you select "Record Screen," this control panel opens. By default, "Full Screen" is selected. For your first capture, and the example we will be showing in this tutorial, leave "Full Screen" selected.
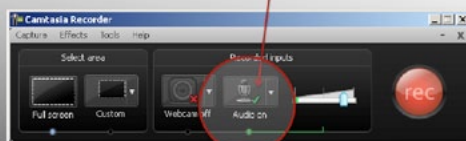
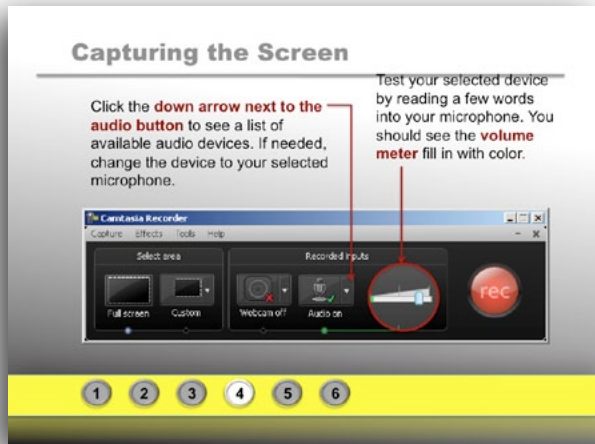As you become more familiar with using Camtasia, you may want to experiment with custom options.

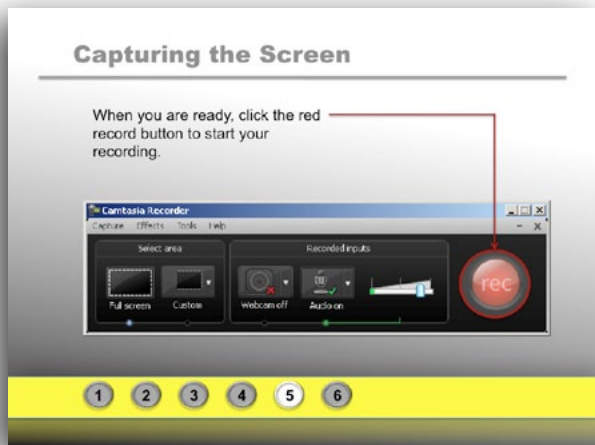**By default, both the microphone and system audio are recorded** and you should see a green check next to the microphone icon, which lets you know that audio will be recorded.

Next to the microphone, there is an arrow that opens a menu from which you can select from multiple inputs, if you have added an external microphone. If the correct one is not selected, use this menu to choose the microphone that you want to use for your audio. Once you have the correct one selected, test it by speaking into it. If it is working correctly, you should see colored bars fill this meter as you speak.

When you are ready to begin recording, press the red button on the right side of the control panel.

Once you've clicked the record button, you will see a five-second countdown timer. Use these last few seconds to get yourself ready to begin. While you are recording, any actions that take place on your computer screen, along with audio coming into the microphone will be captured.

When you are done, press the F10 button to stop recording. In the next section, we will cover some of the edit options that Camtasia offers.

Editing the Capture

Editing the Capture – Camtasia Layout

The main Camtasia Studio screen consists of several parts:
- canvas
- timeline
- media bin
- library
- video effects
- audio effects

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧

This section is designed to familiarize you with the Camtasia screencast editing software.

Editing the Capture – Camtasia Layout

Canvas

- The large center section of the window
- Used to view and edit the screencast

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧

In the center of the screen is the canvas, where you view the screencast you are editing and add additional visual elements.

Editing the Capture – Camtasia Layout
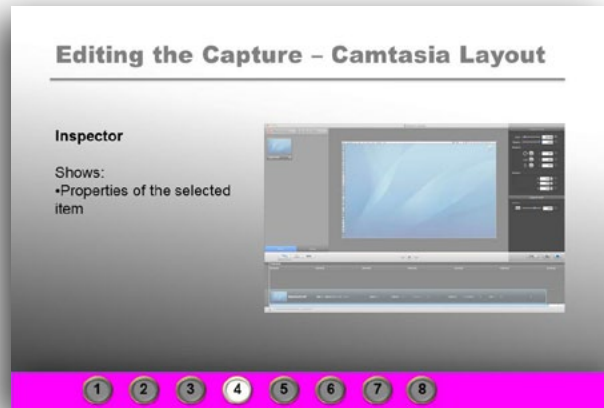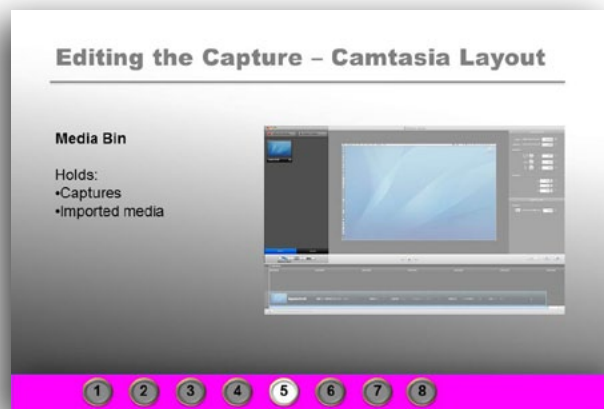
Timeline

Shows:
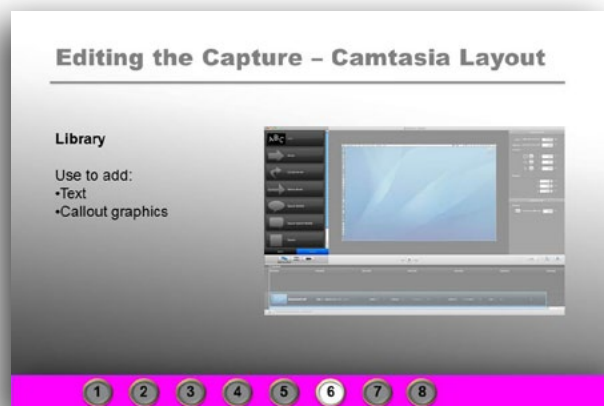- events chronologically from left to right

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧

Below the canvas is the timeline which shows time from left to right and tracks vertically. The initial capture is on one of the tracks, where it can be modified with various effects. New sound and video elements can be added on additional tracks.
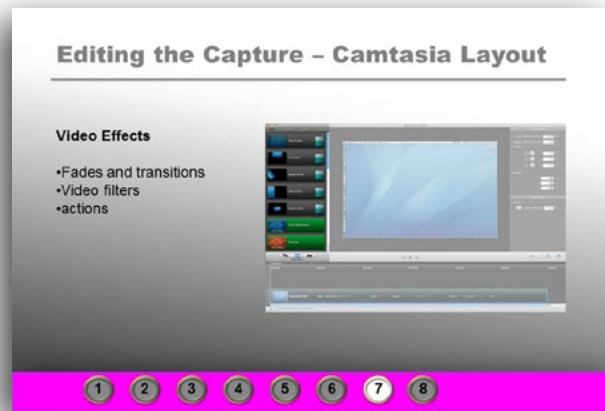
The inspector shows the properties of the selected item.

The left side pane shows either the **Media Bin**, which holds capture recordings and imported media...

...the **library**, which houses callout graphics...

...the **video effects** and...

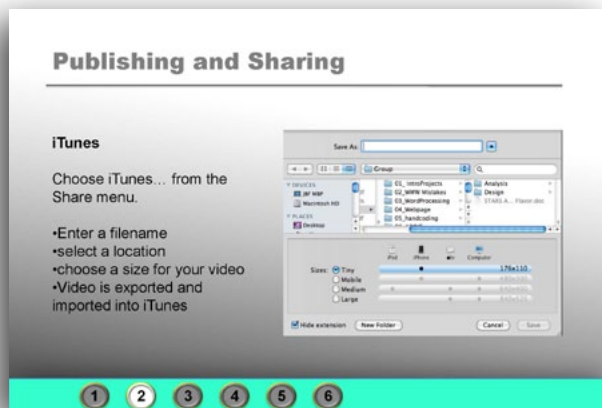...**audio effects** and **captions**.

Publishing and Sharing

Once editing is completed, Camtasia makes it easy to utilize your video. You can either create a video file in several different formats and resolutions, or upload the video to a sharing site and link or embed that video.

Saving a video file:
iTunes and Apple iDevices
Export and advanced export
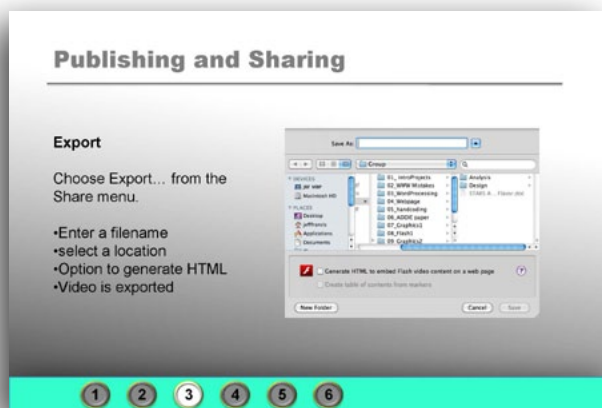
Saving to a web host:
YouTube
Screencast.com

Choose "iTunes" from the Share menu.
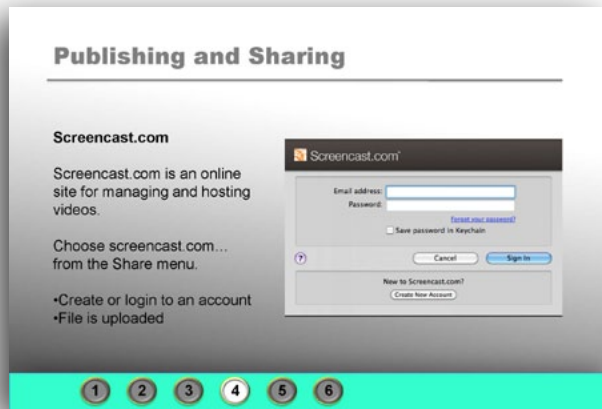Enter a filename, select a location, and choose a size for your video.

Camtasia exports the video and automatically imports it into iTunes where it can easily be transferred to an iPod, iPhone, or iPad.
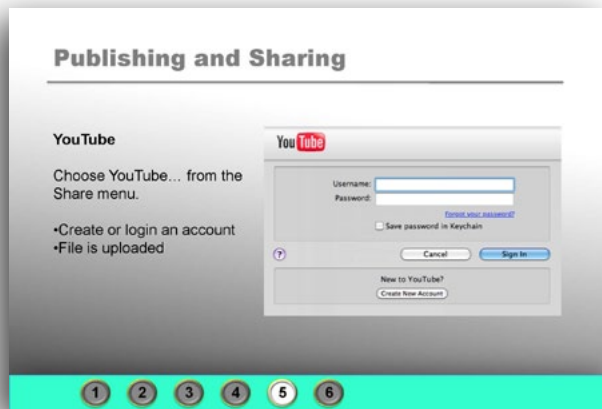

Choose "Export" from the Share menu.
Enter a filename and select a location for your video.

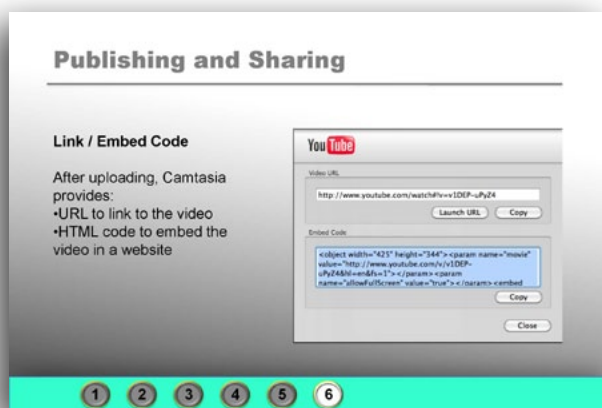Camtasia exports the video. It can even automatically general the necessary HTML to embed the video in a website.

What is Screencast.com? Screencast.com is an online site for managing and hosting videos.

Choose "screencast.com" from the Share menu. Create a new account or if you have a screencast.com account, enter your username (email address) and password.
Camtasia exports the video and automatically uploads it to screencast.com.

Choose "YouTube" from the Share menu. Create a new account or if you have a YouTube account, enter your username and password. Camtasia exports the video and automatically uploads it to YouTube.com.

Once a video has been uploaded to either screencast.com or YouTube, Camtasia provides the web address that links directly to the video. This can be accessed directly or copied into html code.

Camtasia also provides the HTML code for embedding this video into your website. Simple copy the HTML code using the copy button and paste it into your HTML.

This guide was created with content compiled by Dawn Sudduth and Jeff Francis in partnership with Catherine Murphy in partial completion of a course requirement for EDET 703 at the University of South Carolina, Educational Technology M.Ed. Program.

Sources:
Content |TechSmith.com
Stock images | dreamstime.com