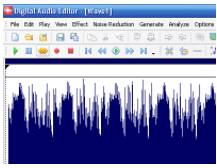


27 December 2006

By: Florin Tibu, Editor, Software Reviews



Continuous Perfection

Make things right with your audio files

Multimedia is now a common term; it has long time descended from the “ivory tower” and it’s no longer used by quite a few “gifted” ones. Multimedia is today common sense, be it audio or video and it is present in most and even in the smallest corners of our lives and I guess there isn't a home with a PC inside it and whose owners did not at least experiment with multimedia. From the high-tech it represented few years ago, it has become an almost natural component of the human life and we experience it every day, whether we're in a bus going to work, or in our car, or using the cellphone. And since multimedia content means not only what we “get” and has been edited prior to its distribution, but also what we can create in this field, the need for tools to help us in our endeavor seems more than obvious. Of course there are tools and tools: some are very complex and are intended for extreme and professional use, while others are designed to reach almost every home and be used by almost any kind of users. It's the case of the Digital Audio Editor, today's software, a program very easy to use and quite intuitive, yet remaining a rather powerful tool, perfectly fit for what multimedia (especially audio) needs may appear in the warmth of your home.

The LooksOne thing is sure: the Digital Audio Editor looks pretty OK, without any futile graphical elements and definitely no “fancy” things. It's far more comfortable to run it in the fullscreen mode than windowed, as the fullscreen allows the user to get a better view on the waveform and also on the numerous buttons the Digital Audio Editor's GUI has been adorned with. The way Digital Audio Editor has been designed left me with the impression that its creators really wanted every person to be able to operate it: there are 2 main sections in the GUI of the editor – one in the top region and the rest. The first one houses all the menus and – more importantly – all the direct command buttons; it is somehow the heart of the Digital Audio Editor operational thinking. Technically, one has about everything needed in that region, from transport control buttons to buttons accessing the numerous effects the editor has bundled together. As a matter of fact, the menus are nothing but very well-structured and grouped access-points for various functions and features in this nice piece of software. The cool fact is that, for the newbies, all these commands have been also “buttoned” with intuitive and good-looking icons. Even though a bit too small for my personal liking, these icons are easy to learn and remember so the “next time” one will use the Digital Audio Editor things will be much easier. Without any coloring schemes or any “funky” skins, this editor simply looks very good the way it is now: the waveform sine is blue on white background and bright blue on black background when selected. The very handy mouse-wheel scrolling zoom is doing a great job when someone might happen to be in need of precise editing – one can go as “close” to the music as in other major sound editing applications so here the Digital Audio Editor gets good points from me. Also, the Zoom to Selection feature is available and this can dramatically speed up things when you are working with audio and need to instantly check things out. The menus and the dialog windows for effects and generally speaking for setting up and making the software work are very easy and I am quite confident that there will be no one “lost” in the options or FX-tweak windows. One very nice “visual” feature of the Digital Audio Editor is that the user can really customize his/her workspace the way it feels best or is needed: absolutely every set of buttons can be undocked and moved freely on the entire area of the editor and docked to any side according to the user's wish. This feature makes the Digital Audio Editor be one of the cool-featured pieces of similar software I have met...and this is good! As a final note on the way the Digital Audio Editor is displayed: the beginners will find the auto labeling quite helpful as the program will tell them what a certain button does as they will hover their

mouse's cursor over it.**The Works**If you're looking for a powerful audio editing tool for your home, both reliable and easy to use yet not a budget wrecker it's quite likely that the Digital Audio Editor is what you've been looking for. Don't expect it to help you create and master the Star Wars soundtrack, but rather to offer you a very decent (and large, I'd say) array of editing opportunities, from the most usual such as cut/copy and paste audio regions up to the most complex FX-ing in the shape of hi/lo-pass filters, pitch shifting, shelving and so on. Basically, almost everything you could think of when it comes to editing an audio file has been comprised in the Digital Audio Editor, from simple selecting methods to the most intricate parametric EQs.No matter if you choose the Open file classic method or simply drop a file in the workspace of the Digital Audio Editor, the software will load it and will be also "ready to go". There is not much I could tell you about the way the Digital Audio Editor works as this would transform this review in some sort of a user's manual; I'll just limit myself to saying some of the nice things one could do with the help of this cool, this under-30-dollars piece of code.First of all, you must know that it really works and by no means is the Digital Audio Editor a joke-software or a toy for children who want to spend some time in front of the PC. Even the professionals could easily use it with even greater success than the average user as it is really filled with so many options and SFX that can be almost infinitely tweaked and re-set up according to your wish. One could tell that Digital Audio Editor is not a pro-tool the moment he notices the few shortcuts available for the multitude of commands; well, the GUI is also not-so-professional; nevertheless, we must not forget that this isn't but a home use-oriented software and not a studio one!Even so, you will be able to do with Digital Audio Editor almost anything a professional-grade software would allow you to do, whether it's about shelving audio, spectrum-edit it, tweak the dynamics of a track, echo, chorus or fade. The nice thing in the Digital Audio Editor is that it offers both a large extent of FX-ing and a fair amount of presets as well, for the same money other programs would sell you nothing. Digital Audio Editor would work just perfectly with your home-made movies as you want to edit their audio backgrounds or mix in music, speech or other audio material; the editor will also let you record audio from absolutely any source present on your PC, thus expanding the possibilities of your creativity.I would say at any time that the Digital Audio Editor is definitely a no-nonsense piece of code: it comes fully loaded with what people might usually need in audio editing. And unless you are planning to build up a musical studio, the Digital Audio Editor might be the right choice you'd make to have enough audio processing power at hand for a pretty good price; plus, no matter how inexperienced one user might be, s/he'll surely figure out at least the basics of audio editing from the very first times running the Digital Audio Editor.**The Good**The best parts of the Digital Audio Editor were that its GUI is truly flexible and the user can actually set up the workspace according to personal desires or needs, the fact that this software contains most of the audio editing tools one might meet in programs worth several hundreds of bucks and it is very intuitive so the user gets acquainted to working with it in a short time.**The Bad** Personally, I am not at all a fan of the Ctrl+P-set of commands and I find the Spacebar way easier and logical to be used for triggering the playback/stop. As well, some of the most common commands should have shortcuts for a greater efficiency.**The Truth**While being well worth the almost 30 USD the Digital Audio Editor sells for, it is a very useful software for those who are more into the audio/video world. I guess Digital Audio Editor is not the best of its kind, but it's definitely in the elite among its peers. Give it a try and you might like it more than you'd expect...*Please take a look at the screenshots below to get the big picture:*