

OAS Express Playout Users Guide

(Based on OAS Playout Users Guide v2.0)

V1.0

July 2021, by Jon Bird

©2005-2021 OnASticksoftware

| | | |
|-------|--|----|
| 1 | Introduction | 4 |
| 1.1 | Assumptions and Constraints | 4 |
| 1.2 | Where to start..... | 4 |
| 2 | Getting Started with Playout..... | 5 |
| 2.1 | Starting Playout | 6 |
| 2.2 | Initial Setup..... | 7 |
| 2.3 | The Main Player..... | 8 |
| 2.3.1 | Loading Music into the Player | 9 |
| 2.3.2 | Playing a loaded track – the Player controls..... | 10 |
| 2.3.3 | The Track History Dialog | 12 |
| 2.3.4 | Loading more tracks into the Player | 13 |
| 2.3.5 | The Multi Play Panel | 15 |
| 2.3.6 | Cross-fading..... | 15 |
| 2.3.7 | Keyboard shortcuts | 16 |
| 2.3.8 | The <i>Audio Selector</i> Dialog | 16 |
| 2.3.9 | Normal and Auto play modes..... | 21 |
| 3 | Managing audio in OAS Playout..... | 23 |
| 3.1 | The Playout System | 23 |
| 3.2 | Playout Express..... | 23 |
| 3.2.1 | Importing Music..... | 24 |
| 3.2.2 | Editing Music information | 27 |
| 4 | Jingles and other audio | 30 |
| 4.1 | Manipulating Jingles in Playout Express | 30 |
| 4.1.1 | Importing Jingles | 30 |
| 4.1.2 | Editing Jingle/Advert information | 32 |
| 4.2 | Jingles in Playout – the Jingle Players..... | 34 |
| 4.2.1 | Loading and playing clips | 34 |
| 4.2.2 | Interaction with the Main Player – auto fading | 36 |
| 4.2.3 | Loading Jingles – the drag `n drop way | 36 |
| 4.2.4 | Jingles in the Main Player..... | 38 |
| 5 | Custom Audio Lists and the Button Wall | 39 |
| 5.1 | About Custom Audio Lists | 39 |
| 5.2 | Creating Custom Lists in Playout Express..... | 39 |
| 5.3 | Using Custom Audio Lists in Playout..... | 40 |
| 5.4 | The Button Walls | 42 |
| 5.5 | Moving and Resizing the Button Wall..... | 43 |
| 5.6 | Altering Button Wall definitions in Playout..... | 46 |
| 5.6.1 | Changing the clip associated with a button..... | 46 |
| 5.6.2 | Creating a new Button Wall Set | 47 |
| 5.7 | List Filters | 48 |
| 6 | Playlists | 49 |
| 6.1 | Creating a Playlist in Playout Express | 49 |
| 6.2 | Using PlayLists in Playout | 52 |
| 6.2.1 | Manually loading Playlists..... | 52 |
| 6.2.2 | Automation | 53 |
| 6.2.3 | More about Playlists | 55 |
| 7 | Where Next?..... | 56 |
| 7.1 | Online Help..... | 56 |
| 7.2 | Developers Guide | 56 |
| 7.3 | Contact us | 56 |

1 INTRODUCTION

Welcome to OAS Payout – a comprehensive digital audio player designed for the seamless cueing and playing of digital music files held on a computer system (mp3). It also has dedicated support for additional audio media such as may be utilized on a radio station – jingles, advertisements and other small sound ‘bites’.

This manual provides a step-by-step guide to using and getting the most out of the OAS Payout system. The intent of this guide is not to provide information on every aspect of the package – the online help will provide information on all the options and capabilities of the package. Instead, the aim is to provide a more readable guide to using the system, starting from the basics and working forward covering aspects of both packages – Payout and Payout Express.

This manual was written based on OAS Payout v4.0 – most screen shots are taken from this release. Later or earlier versions may differ slightly.

1.1 Assumptions and Constraints

Some familiarity with digital music held on computer systems is assumed, as is the ability to create these files – into MP3/WAV formats etc. This can be accomplished by ‘ripping’ CDs into this format (using third party software) or downloading the content directly from an online source eg. the *Amazon* music store. In the latter instance, you need to be careful that the audio format is compatible with OAS Payout and is not [DRM protected](#) (many files from iTunes fall into this category). Payout supports a multitude of audio formats including MP3 and Windows Media (WMA).

If the intent is to use the package on a radio station, access to station jingles or similar audio in this format would also be extremely useful. These will also need to be held in a compatible digital format however they probably will not be taken from a CD but recorded somewhere into this format – this manual does not cover how to convert them into this format or record them but simply assumes you have access to them in a computerised format.

A certain amount of experience with using the Microsoft Windows operating system is also assumed – being familiar with using the mouse and general usage of the Windows controls. An understanding of navigating the file system using Windows (or *File*) Explorer (or My Computer) is required in order to understand some of the more advanced aspects topics introduced later in this manual.

1.2 Where to start

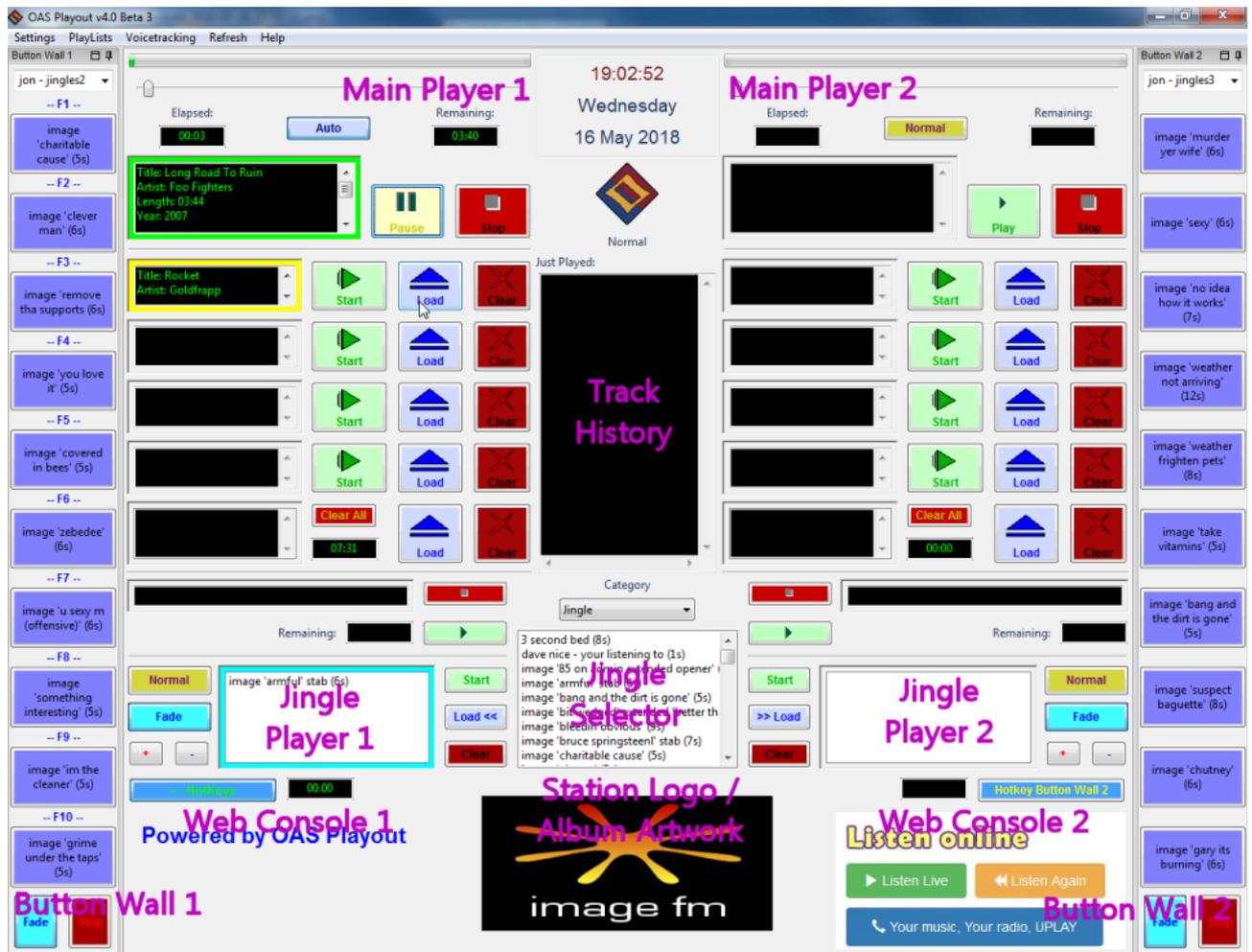
Payout should be installed onto your system, by default into the standard installation path of *C:\Program Files (x86)\OAS Payout Express* unless this was changed during the installation process. Registered users need to have obtained a license code and unlocked the software in accordance with the license agreement displayed during installation.

It is assumed at this point none of the other default settings have been changed – moving of the Payout Database, changing of default preferences etc. – whilst it is not mandatory that this is the case it is certainly helpful with regard to following this manual.

The next step on installation is to follow and try out the basic steps given in the *Quick Start Guide* – a shortcut to this is on the desktop after Payout has been installed. This will go through an initial step by step process of creating a simple file structure, copying audio files and loading the music into the Payout system and give a good starting point in order to begin using the system. Then proceed with the following sections of this guide.

2 GETTING STARTED WITH PLAYOUT

The Playout application is the “presenter” side of the package that is in a radio environment the software which is used for playing the broadcast audio. The other half of the package, Playout Express is the “production” side of the package where the audio is loaded, edited and stored into the system.



Playout Overview

Playout is essentially split into two identical Player consoles; in a radio environment each console is routed through a separate sound card on the PC to a fader on the presenter’s mixing desk. Therefore, you get two independent audio outputs so that whilst one channel is playing “live” the other may be used to check audio off air (or “pfl”). Using the mixing desk, the channels may also be cross faded and mixed together along with any other audio source.

Each console is further split into a Main Player, Jingle Player and a Button Wall– as represented in the picture above. The Main Players are predominantly used for playing music whilst the Jingle Players for (as the name suggests) jingles, adverts (if you are operating a commercial station) and other small sound “bites”. The Button Wall offers a further approach for playing jingles and other short audio clips with the press of click of a single button. Whilst this is the intended use, it is however not enforced and you can also play jingles, adverts etc. through the Main Players.

In the centre of the package are the current clock time and a track history pane which gives a list of the most recently played tracks from either of the Main Players.

2.1 Starting Playback

Playback is started from either the desktop shortcut labelled *OAS Playback* or from the *Start* menu under *Programs, OAS Playback*. Playback is designed to run on a display size of a minimum of 1280x1024 however it can run on screens which offer lower resolutions – down to 1280x768. In this configuration, some features are not available and there are fewer buttons on the Button Wall.

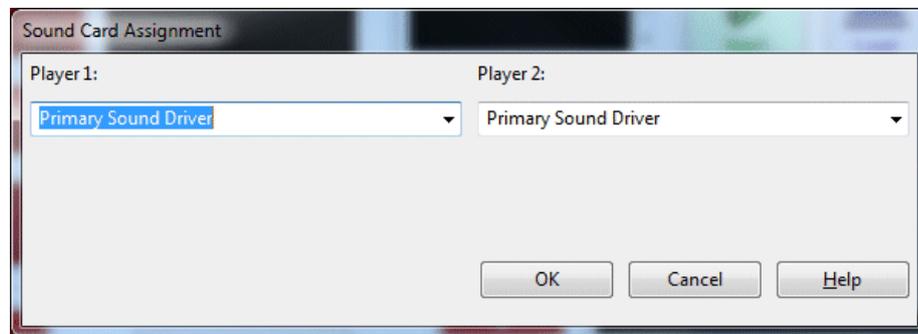


Playback in reduced screen size mode

2.2 Initial Setup

Initially, you will need to assign soundcard(s) to the two players. As mentioned before, Playout is designed to operate two separate audio channels and for this you will need either two separate sound cards or one of the more “professional” varieties which support multiple outputs from a single card. If you only intend to use one channel or only have one sound card you may skip this section as Playout will default to using the card for both channels.

From Playout’s main menu, choose the *Settings* then *Sound Cards, Default* option.



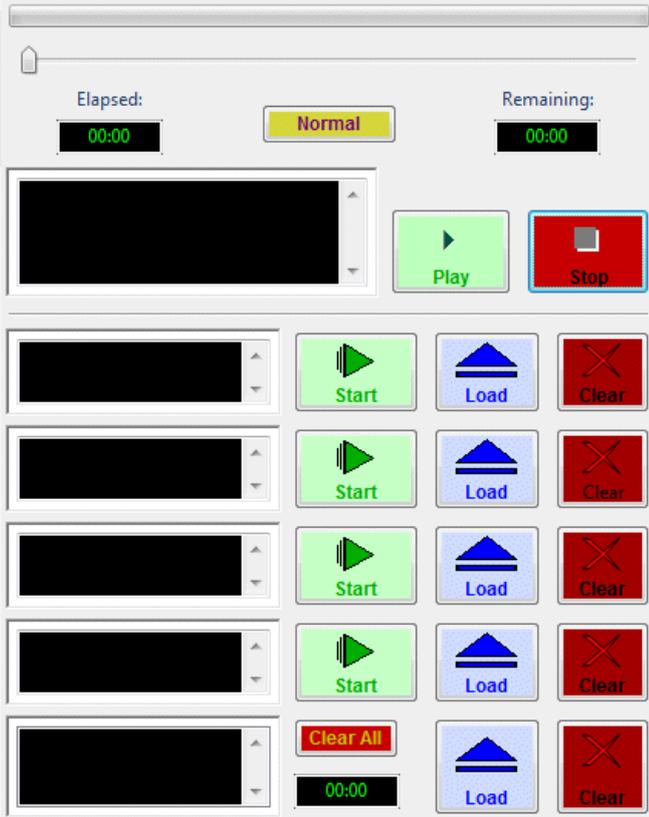
Sound Card Settings

By default, Playout automatically assigns both channels to the *Primary Sound Driver*. This is the sound card Windows and all other audio applications will use for playback of audio. In addition, you should also see another item which identifies your sound card and if you have more than one card or multiple channels on a single card, additional entries for those as well. You should assign one of these to each channel of the system. Press *OK* to close the dialog.

Note: If you have sound playback issues, particularly if using a more “professional” sound card (such as one of the M-Audio Delta series) you can opt to use the alternative ASIO driver with Playout. More information is available in the online help on using this feature.

2.3 The Main Player

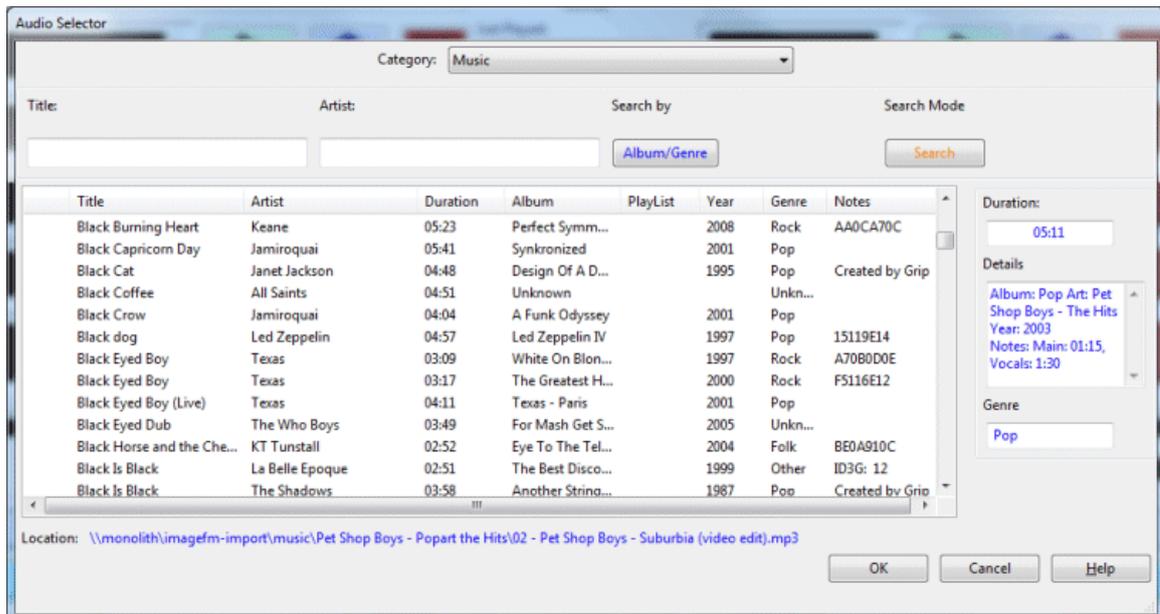
All music is played out through one of the two Main Players. They operate identically (and independently) so we will only deal with using Player 1 throughout this guide.



Main Player Console

2.3.1 Loading Music into the Player

To begin, press the topmost *Load* button on main player 1. You will be presented with the list of tracks you loaded during the *Quick Start Guide*.



Audio Selector

From here, select the track you wish to play using the mouse and press the OK button. The details of the track will be displayed in the box next to the *Load* button you pressed.



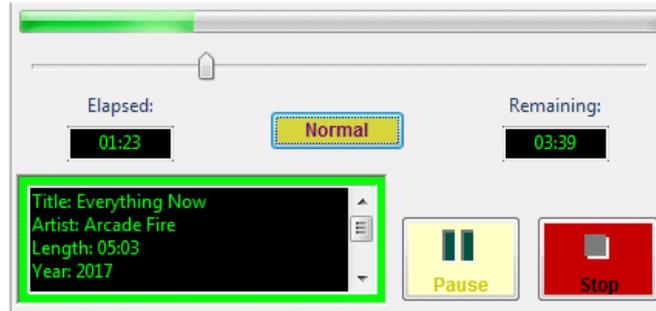
The panel normally contains enough space to display information about the title and artist of the track. However further information can be viewed by using the up and down arrows next to the display to gain information such as the album, track duration and any additional notes which may be held with the track. The border of a loaded play panel is highlighted light blue to indicate a valid track is loaded and ready for playback.

Once a track is loaded into a panel there are three things you can do with it:

- Begin playback of the track by pressing the *Start* button
- Replace the track with another by pressing the *Load* button again
- Blank the panel by pressing the *Clear* button.

2.3.2 Playing a loaded track – the Player controls

Press the *Start* button to begin playback. The track information is copied to the *Track Playing Details* at the top of the Main Player and the loaded panel cleared ready for a new track to be loaded.



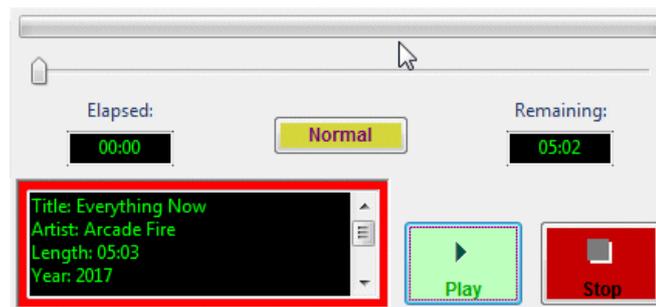
Track Playing Details

Playback starts immediately. As the track progresses, the bars at the top of the panel are updated along with the two time counters – one gives a track elapsed time and the other the track remaining time.

The track details are displayed in a larger panel than when loaded and as with the load panels, further information (if available) can be displayed by using the Up/Down arrows next to the panel.

The panel's controls – *Stop* and *Pause* work in a similar manner to those on a CD player and the colour of the border around the track details gives an indication of the state of the player – in the previous picture green indicates playback is in progress.

Pressing the *Stop* button halts playback and resets the progress bar back to the start of the track.



Stopped playback state

The border of the track details panel changes to red to indicate playback has stopped and what was the Pause button is now labelled as *Play*. To start playback of the same track again, press the *Play* button.

To pause a playing track, press the yellow *Pause* button.



Paused playback state

The border of the track details is now yellow to indicate a paused state and what was the *Pause* button is now replaced with a *Resume* button.

Press *Resume* to re-commence playback.

When a track is paused, its playback position may be altered (similar to a fast forward or rewind) by dragging the track bar (up arrow underneath the progress indicator) with the mouse. When the Resume button is pressed, playback will commence from this new position.

A finer degree of movement may be applied by first moving the mouse over the track bar – a grey dotted border is displayed around it.



Track bar movement

Then use the left and right arrow keys to apply a gradual movement of the track bar.

2.3.3 The Track History Dialog

When a track completes playback, the details are cleared from the Track Playing panel and are copied into the track history dialog. This sits in the middle of the package between the two Main Player consoles.



Track History Dialog

The history dialog keeps a record of the last 6 tracks played by both Main Players (Player 1 and Player 2) with the most recent played track listed at the top of the dialog. The up/down scrollbar next to the dialog may be used to view the older played tracks if desired.

2.3.4 Loading more tracks into the Player

Each Main Player has four identical panels, all of which may have tracks loaded into them ready for playback at the press of a button; tracks may even be loaded whilst another is playing.



Therefore, you can queue a few tracks up in advance ready for playback. In addition, you can start playback of any of these tracks by pressing the appropriate *Start* button.

When you press the *Start* button for a given track, all of the tracks in the lower panels are shuffled up by one.



Therefore, in the above example, the track in panel 3 has been started causing the track in panel 4 to be shuffled up by one. Normally you would start at the first panel and load tracks into the lower panels but the choice is yours.

2.3.5 The Multi Play Panel

The bottommost panel is slightly different in that it does not have a *Start* button. This is termed the Multi Play panel because it allows any number of tracks to be loaded into it.



Multi Play Panel

Each time you use the *Load* button next to this panel, a new track is added to the bottom of the list displayed in the panel. Use the up and down arrow keys to scroll down the full list of tracks loaded.

Tracks cannot be played from the multi panel, they rely on being shuffled into a main panel, normally by the act of a prior loaded track completing playback. At which point the track at the top of the list is shuffled into the bottom play panel.



In general, the multi panel is not used in manual operation as it is unlikely you will need or want to load that many tracks in advance. It is more often used when running *Playout* in *automatic* mode where you wish to play back a number of tracks unattended, this is discussed further in a later section.

Removing tracks from the multi-panel is also slightly different; you first need to highlight the track to be removed by scrolling down the list and clicking on it with the mouse. Then press the *Clear* button to remove it.

The multi-panel also hosts two other items:

- The *Clear All* button serves to remove all loaded tracks from all the panels and serves as a quick mechanism to blank all the tracks in one go rather than repeatedly pressing the *Clear* button for each.
- The time in green represents the total length of all the loaded tracks in all the panels including the multi-panel and the currently playing track. It decreases in line with the currently playing track.

2.3.6 Cross-fading

You do not have to wait until one track completes playback to start another. At any time, you can press the *Start* button on a loaded panel to initiate playback, at which point playback of the new track starts immediately and the details displayed in the track details pane represent the new track as does the progress bar/elapsed time indicators. Information on the old track is copied to the history dialog. However, the existing track continues to play such that the two tracks overlap, at the same time the old track is gradually faded out until it can no longer be heard. Therefore, you can use a single player to “cross fade” between two tracks. The obvious use for this is to begin playback of a new track as the old one fades out to completion.

If you press the *Stop*, *Pause* or another player control it will only affect the newly loaded track therefore the old track will continue to be faded out regardless. If you start playback of

another track whilst an overlap is in progress, the previously loaded track is stopped immediately and the new one starts. The track being faded out continues uninterrupted. Therefore, you can only have 2 tracks playing at any one time.

2.3.7 Keyboard shortcuts

As you become accustomed to using the players, you may find it convenient to use some of the keyboard shortcuts instead of always relying on mouse clicks. Playout offers two sets of keyboard shortcuts with the Main Players.

Firstly, you can immediately start playback of the next available loaded track in a Main Player by pressing the '1' key for Main Console 1 and '2' for Main Console '2'.

Secondly you can use the spacebar to press any button which has keyboard focus. You may have noticed that as you move the mouse over various buttons, a box is on the button.



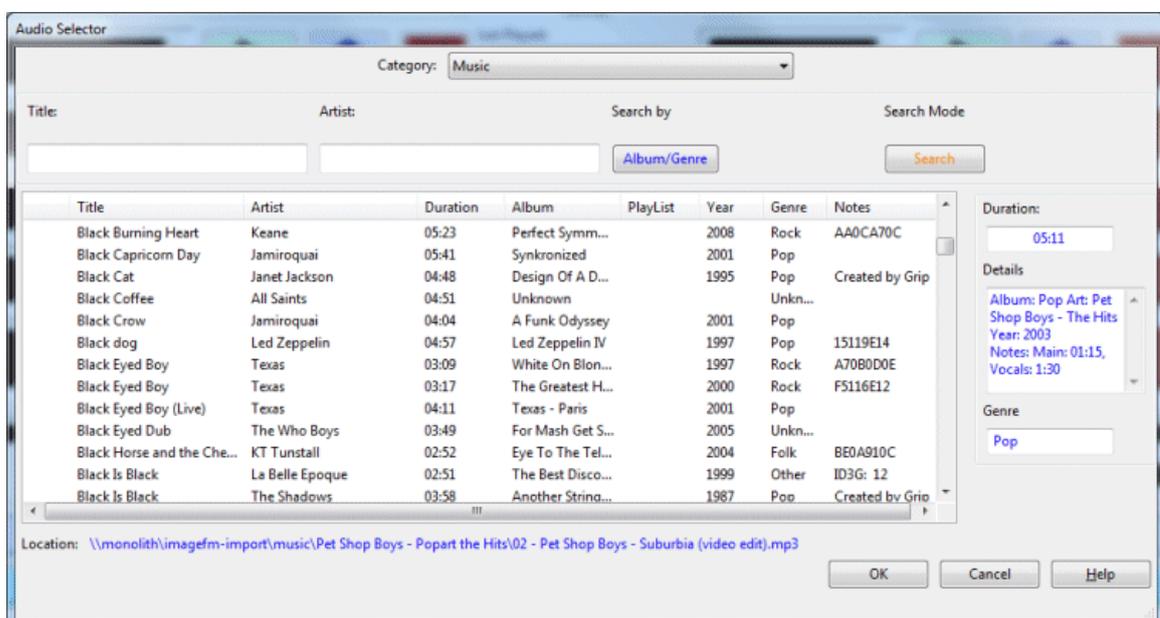
Keyboard Focus

The box indicates the button now has keyboard focus and by pressing the spacebar this will have the same effect as clicking on the button with the mouse.

The shortcuts are often useful for performing rapid starting of tracks in a "back to back" fashion, you can start a track quickly with say the '1' key then use the currently highlighted button to begin immediate playback of something else avoiding the delays inherent with moving the mouse and locating the button to press.

2.3.8 The Audio Selector Dialog

The dialog which is displayed when you press the Load button on a panel has been briefly introduced, this section now covers some of the features of the dialog.



The dialog is designed to allow you to very quickly locate and find a desired track. This is important because a radio station may contain a music catalogue of several thousand tracks

and there needs to be a way to find a given track easily. In addition, it allows you to load multiple tracks into the play panels without repeatedly opening and closing the dialog.

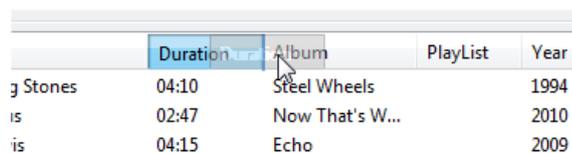
2.3.8.1 The track list selector

The bulk of the dialog comprises the track list selector which is a sorted list of all the available music in the playout database. By default, it is sorted alphabetically by track Title and you can use the up/down arrow keys and the vertical scroll bar to navigate down the list.

There is a variety of information held about a track which you can view here – initially the columns on display include the more commonly useful information such as Title, Artist etc. but you can scroll more into view by scrolling the horizontal scrollbar at the bottom of the view.

2.3.8.1.1 Re-arranging the view

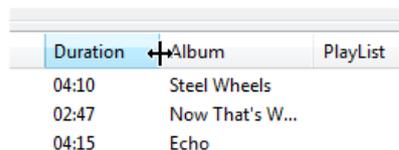
You can re-arrange the order (and size) of the columns displayed in the view by simply using the mouse to click onto the title bar of the column you wish to move then dragging it to the left or right until it is positioned correctly, then release the mouse button.



| | Duration | Album | PlayList | Year |
|----------|----------|-----------------|----------|------|
| g Stones | 04:10 | Steel Wheels | | 1994 |
| is | 02:47 | Now That's W... | | 2010 |
| is | 04:15 | Echo | | 2009 |

Re-arrange the view

To adjust the width of a column, move the mouse to the space between the column titles until it changes to a black line with two arrows. Then with the left mouse button depressed, drag the column width to the desired size and release the button.



| | Duration | Album | PlayList |
|-------|----------|-----------------|----------|
| 04:10 | | Steel Wheels | |
| 02:47 | | Now That's W... | |
| 04:15 | | Echo | |

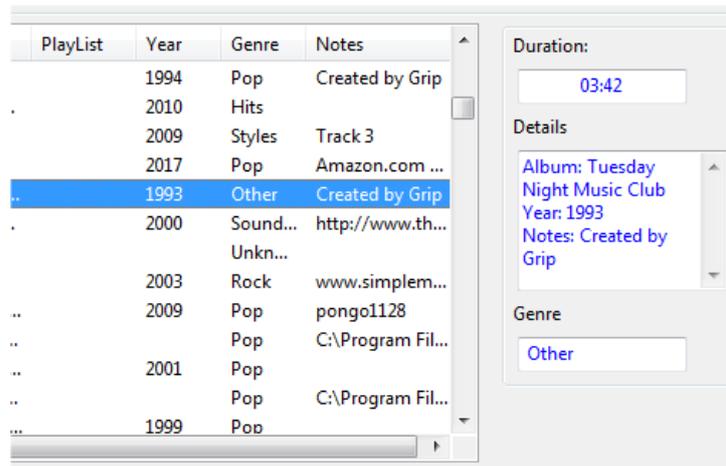
Resize a column

2.3.8.1.2 Changing the sort order

As previously mentioned, by default the display is sorted by track title, you can however change this by simply clicking on the title of a column you wish to sort by. So, to sort the view by Artist click on the *Artist* title bar and the view will update to reflect this. If you click on a column which the view is already sorted by, a reverse sort is applied. Therefore, instead of tracks being displayed from A-Z they will be from Z back to A.

2.3.8.2 Selecting a track

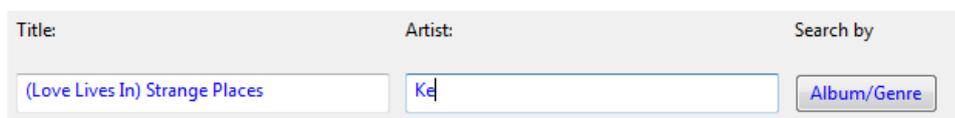
If you select a track – by single clicking on it with the mouse, the track is highlighted with a bar and details about the track are displayed in the panel to the right of the list view.



To load the selected track into a play panel press the OK button.

2.3.8.3 Searching for a track

You can very quickly locate a track by using the Search panels at the top of the dialog.



Search Panel

Start by typing in the first few letters of the title or artist of a track you wish to locate and the list view will be scrolled into view the first few tracks, which meet that criteria. It helps if you sort the view to match your search pattern so if you are searching by artist, sort the view by artist. Once you have located a track nearby you can either complete the full artist name to narrow the search or just scroll around the view until you locate the track you are looking for.

You can also search by Album or Genre if required by first pressing the Album/Genre button to the right of the panel.

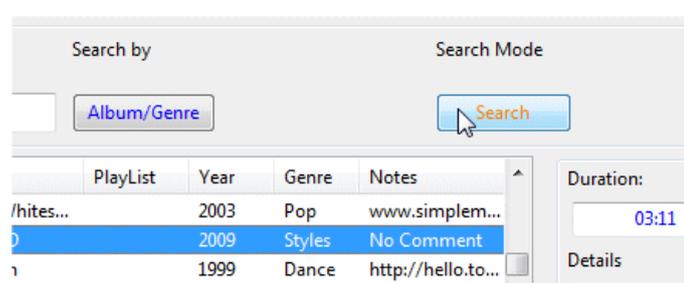


Now you can enter an album or genre to search for. To restore the normal search panel press the Title/Artist button.

2.3.8.3.1 Search Mode

If you cannot find the track you are looking for by typing in the first few letters of the Title/Artist (for example if the track has not been entered in an obvious manner or you can't quite remember the full name of the track), you can use *Search Mode* to help locate the track. Search Mode allows you to specify text, which can appear anywhere (ie. not just at the start) in the Title/Artist. A list of tracks meeting the criteria is then displayed.

To use Search Mode, press the orange *Search* button.



Enter your search criteria in the Title/Artist box and hit the *Go!* Button.

The screenshot shows a search interface with the following elements:

- Title:** An empty text input field.
- Artist:** A text input field containing the text "beatl".
- Search by:** A dropdown menu with "Album/Genre" selected.
- Search Mode:** A blue button labeled "Go!".

Only those tracks containing the text you specified will now be displayed – so in the above example all tracks containing the text "beatl" (as in The Beatles) are displayed regardless of where the text appears in the Artist field (so "Beatles; The" and "The Beatles" are displayed).

Search Mode may also be used to locate specific Albums or Genres by via the *Search By* button in the same manner as performing a simple search.

To exit *Search Mode*, make sure both Title & Artist fields are empty and hit the *Go!* Button again. The full track list will now be available again.

2.3.8.4 Loading more than one track at a time

Up till now, you have invoked the dialog via the *Load* button of a play panel you wish to load a track into. In order to load a track into another panel, say the one below it you would need to press the Load button next to that panel. However, *Playout* also allows you to load any number of tracks into *consecutive* play panels. By consecutive, this means the next panel below the one which from which you invoked the Load dialog until you reach the multi-panel. Then tracks are just added to the bottom of the multi-panel.

The first mechanism available to achieve this is to *double click* the track you wish to load. Thus, in the following example – the load dialog was invoked from Play Panel 1, the topmost panel.

The screenshot shows a music player interface with a search dialog open. The search dialog has the following fields:

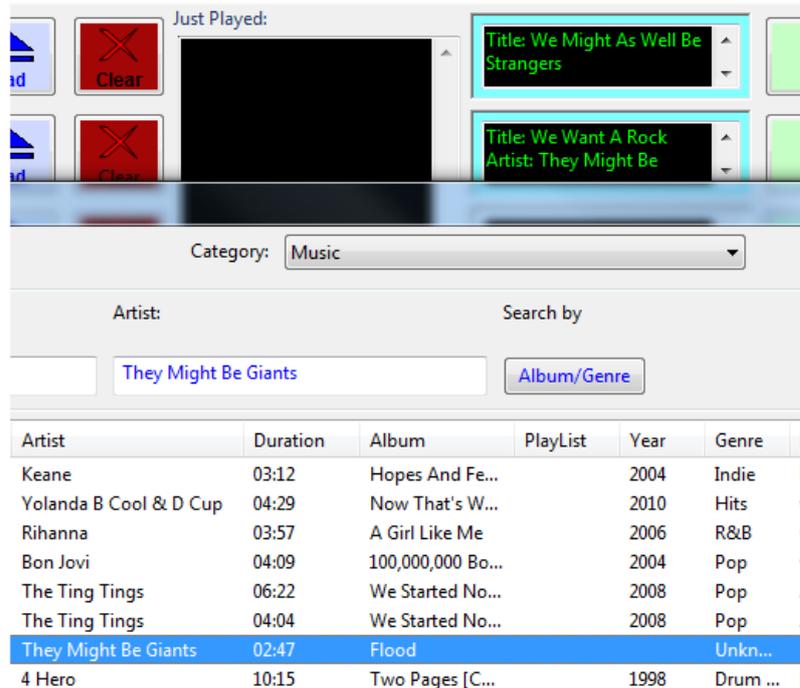
- Title:** "We Might As Well Be Strangers"
- Artist:** "Keane"
- Search by:** "Album/Genre"

Below the search dialog is a table of search results:

| Title | Artist | Duration | Album | PlayList | Year | Genre | Notes |
|----------------------------|------------------------|----------|-------------------|----------|------|-------|--------------|
| We Might As Well Be Str... | Keane | 03:12 | Hopes And Fe... | | 2004 | Indie | B00BDD00 |
| We No Speak Americano | Yolanda B Cool & D Cup | 04:29 | Now That's W... | | 2010 | Hits | www.hou... |
| We Ride | Rihanna | 03:57 | A Girl Like Me | | 2006 | R&B | Created b... |
| We Rule The Night | Bon Jovi | 04:09 | 100,000,000 Bo... | | 2004 | Pop | www.eMu... |
| We Started Nothing | The Ting Tings | 06:22 | We Started No... | | 2008 | Pop | Amazon.c... |

When you double click the desired track, the text *Track queued to player* is displayed at the bottom of the dialog to indicate a successful load. If you move the load dialog to one side for a moment to view the main player you will see the track has been loaded into the topmost play panel.

Now, if you return back to the still open load dialog and double click another track, this will be loaded into the next panel down.

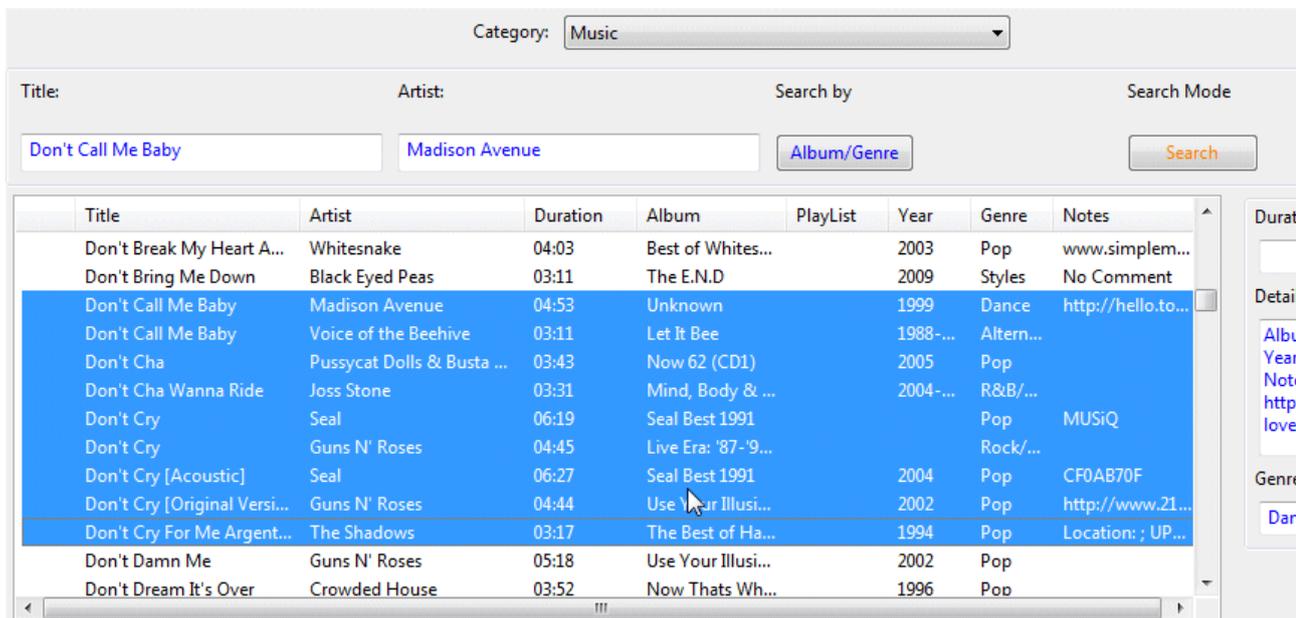


You can continue to add as many tracks in this manner. On completion press the OK button to load the final track or *Cancel* to close the dialog without loading any further tracks.

2.3.8.4.1 Loading a batch of tracks in one go

You can also queue up any number of tracks into the play panels with a few mouse clicks from the load dialog. Windows controls use a standard mechanism to select more than one item in a list view and Playout is no exception. In brief, you can achieve this using one of two mechanisms. First, single left click the first item you wish to add. Then:

- To select a consecutive number of tracks in the view, press the Shift key down and left click the last item in the list you wish to add.



Consecutive multiple selection

- To select an assortment of different tracks in the list view, hold the Ctrl key down and left click the tracks you wish to load.

| Title | Artist | Duration | Album | PlayList | Year | Genre | Notes |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|---------------------|----------|----------|-----------|--------------------|
| Don't Break My Heart A... | Whitesnake | 04:03 | Best of Whites... | | 2003 | Pop | www.simplem... |
| Don't Bring Me Down | Black Eyed Peas | 03:11 | The E.N.D | | 2009 | Styles | No Comment |
| Don't Call Me Baby | Madison Avenue | 04:53 | Unknown | | 1999 | Dance | http://hello.to... |
| Don't Call Me Baby | Voice of the Beehive | 03:11 | Let It Bee | | 1988-... | Altern... | |
| Don't Cha | Pussycat Dolls & Busta ... | 03:43 | Now 62 (CD1) | | 2005 | Pop | |
| Don't Cha Wanna Ride | Joss Stone | 03:31 | Mind, Body & ... | | 2004-... | R&B/... | |
| Don't Cry | Seal | 06:19 | Seal Best 1991 | | | Pop | MUSiQ |
| Don't Cry | Guns N' Roses | 04:45 | Live Era: '87-'9... | | | Rock/... | |
| Don't Cry [Acoustic] | Seal | 06:27 | Seal Best 1991 | | 2004 | Pop | CF0AB70F |
| Don't Cry [Original Versi... | Guns N' Roses | 04:44 | Use Your Illusi... | | 2002 | Pop | http://www.21... |
| Don't Cry For Me Argent... | The Shadows | 03:17 | The Best of Ha... | | 1994 | Pop | Location: ; UP... |
| Don't Damn Me | Guns N' Roses | 05:18 | Use Your Illusi... | | 2002 | Pop | |
| Don't Dream It's Over | Crowded House | 03:52 | Now Thats Wh... | | 1996 | Pop | |

Non-consecutive multi selection

Now, with the mouse cursor over the list view, press the right-hand mouse button until a pop up menu is displayed.

| Title | Artist | Duration | Album | PlayList | Year | Genre | Not |
|----------------------------|-----------------|----------|-------------------|----------|------|---------|-----|
| Black Burning Heart | Keane | 05:23 | Perfect Symm... | | 2008 | Rock | AA |
| Black Capricorn Day | Jamiroquai | 05:41 | Synkronized | | 2001 | Pop | |
| Black Cat | Janet Jackson | 04:48 | Design Of A D... | | 1995 | Pop | Cre |
| Black Coffee | All Saints | 04:51 | | | | Unkn... | |
| Black Crow | Jamiroquai | 04:04 | | | 2001 | Pop | |
| Black dog | Led Zeppelin | 04:57 | | | 1997 | Pop | 151 |
| Black Eyed Boy | Texas | 03:09 | | | 1997 | Rock | A70 |
| Black Eyed Boy | Texas | 03:17 | | | 2000 | Rock | F51 |
| Black Eyed Boy (Live) | Texas | 04:11 | | | 2001 | Pop | |
| Black Eyed Dub | The Who Boys | 03:49 | | | 2005 | Unkn... | |
| Black Horse and the Che... | KT Tunstall | 02:52 | Eye To The Tel... | | 2004 | Folk | BE0 |
| Black Is Black | La Belle Equipe | 02:51 | The Best Disco... | | 1999 | Other | 103 |

From the menu, select the *Queue* option. All the tracks you selected will be added sequentially to the play panels.

There are a number of other (arguably less useful) options you can invoke from this menu; these are fully covered in the online help for Playout.

2.3.9 Normal and Auto play modes

Playout can operate in either a manual (or *Normal*) mode or an automatic (*Auto*) mode. Up till now we have been running in Normal mode, as indicated by the button located at the top of the Main Player.



Normal Mode indicator

Auto mode only has any impact once you start a track playing (by pressing the *Start* button on a Play Panel) and there are other tracks loaded in the Play Panels available when the track

completes. As the playing track completes, typically as it fades out Playout looks for the next loaded track in the Play Panels, starting from the topmost panel and working down to the multi-panel. When it encounters a loaded track, it begins playback, automatically cross fading the tail end of the playing track with the start of the new one.

This allows you to load any number of tracks into the player and have them played out without further interaction.

To put Playout into automatic mode, simply click on the Normal button to toggle it to *Auto*.



Playout in Auto mode

The player controls work the same as in Normal mode – you can stop, pause and resume a track as desired. You can also continue to load tracks into the panels during playback, these will be automatically played out as well. It is also possible to manually start playback of a loaded track at any time, simply by pressing the Start button for the relevant Play Panel.

Playout highlights the next track it will play out by changing the border colour of the panel to yellow (it is normally light blue for a loaded track).

If no more tracks are available for playback, no further action is taken and Playout remains in Auto mode.

3 MANAGING AUDIO IN OAS PLAYOUT

Up until now the principal focus has been on the Playout (presenter side) application based on the music loaded into your database during the *Quick Start Guide*. It's time now to focus a bit more on how audio is loaded and controlled within OAS Playout.

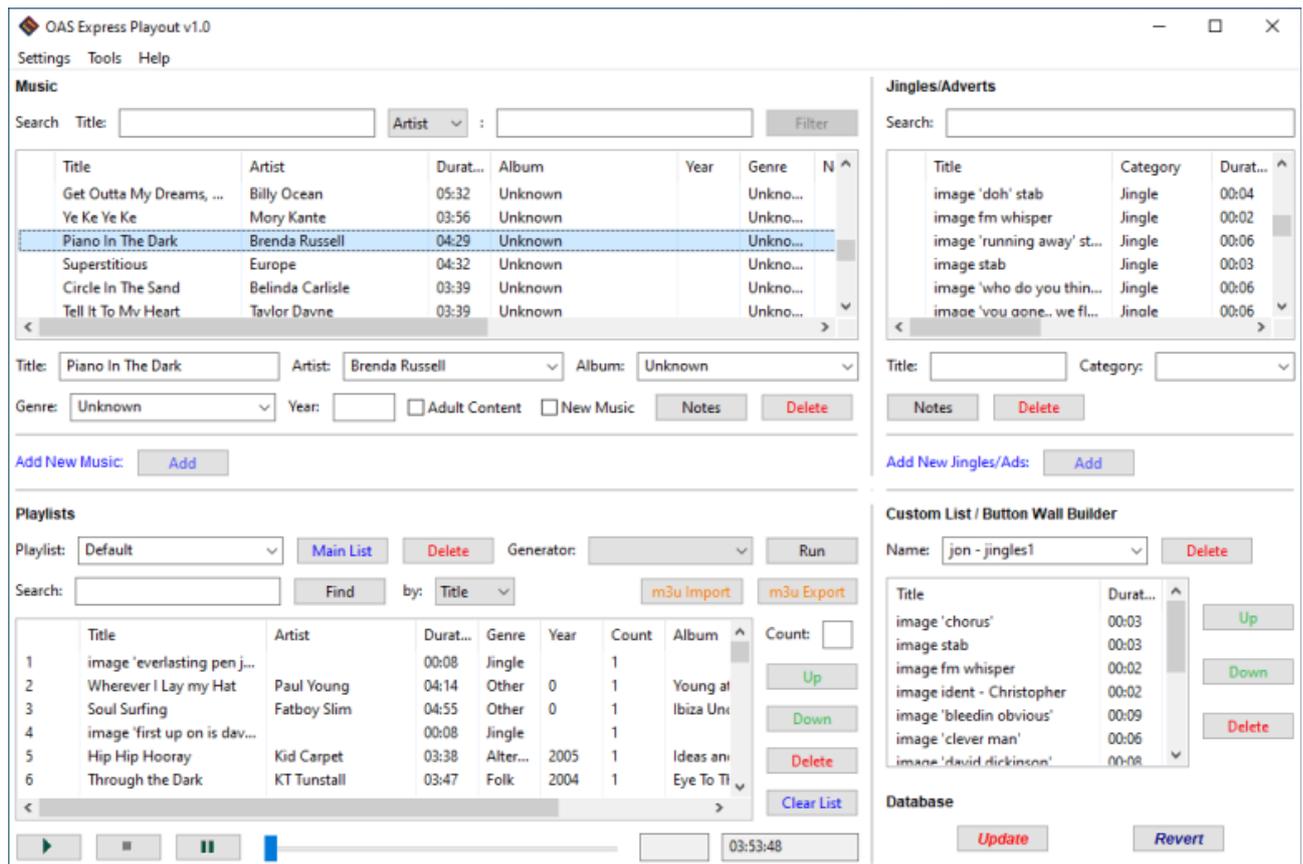
In this section we refer to 'audio' as any sound file to be played by the Playout application – this includes your music and any jingles, adverts or other clips you want to use. Within Playout, audio is categorised as either "Music", such as released singles or tracks from CDs or as "Jingle/Misc" as in "everything else".

3.1 The Playout System

Digital audio files (such as MP3s) are *imported* into the Playout database. This import process is controlled by the *Playout Express* application which is also responsible for editing information held about the track in the database. The tracks are then available for selection via the database with Playout itself. *Import* is a little confusing term here because it suggests the music files themselves are stored in the database which is not the case- rather information about the files is held in the database, the most important of which is where the file is found on your disk. Playout does not modify the files in any way and they can continue to be used by any other audio application for playback.

3.2 Playout Express

Playout Express is responsible for the overall control and maintenance of the Playout database. It is invoked through either the desktop shortcut or via the *Start, Programs, OAS Playout, OAS Playout Express* Menu.



Playout Express

For ease of use, everything you need to do on a day-to-day basis is organised on a single dialog. It's basically divided into four panels described as follows.

The top left of the page is where you manage all the music that is available for OAS Playout to use. This is where you add new music to the system, you can also make changes to the information displayed within Playout about each track. For example, if the title or artist information appears wrong or incomplete you can change it here.

Over in the top right is a similar dialog however this is for all the non-music content, typically jingles and (if you use them) adverts. As with the music panel, you can add new jingle content to the system and make changes to them afterwards.

The bottom left is the panel where you can create and manage *playlists*. These allow you to create lists of audio which can form the running order for a show or as the basis for the audio played out using Playout's automation capabilities. Playlists are discussed in more detail in section 6.

The bottom right panel allows the ability to create and *custom clip lists* which are collections of items from the jingle content. Primarily these are used to define the content of the button walls within Playout however they are also used in other contexts such as created customised jingle lists and for inserting into playlists during periods of automation. These are covered in section 5.

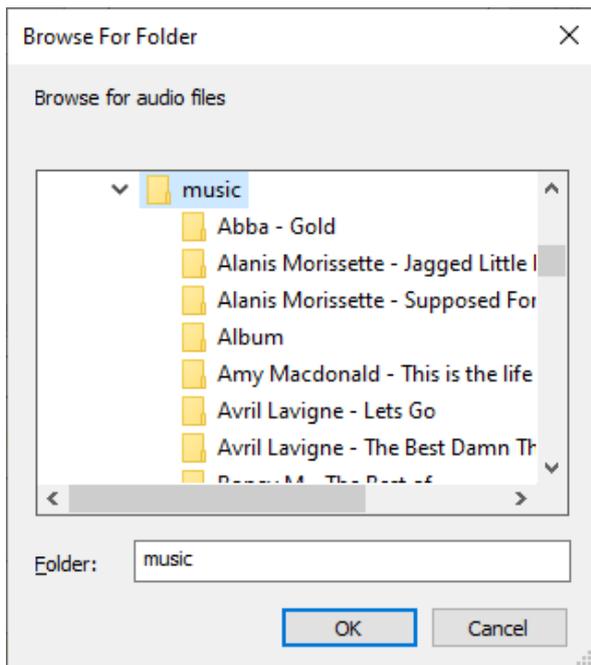
3.2.1 Importing Music

Loading of music into Playout is designed to be as straightforward as possible. You can organise the folders where you store your music in whatever hierarchy you choose, be it all the music in a several folders or organised by artist/album. Playout Express will automatically scan entire directory structures looking for music if necessary.

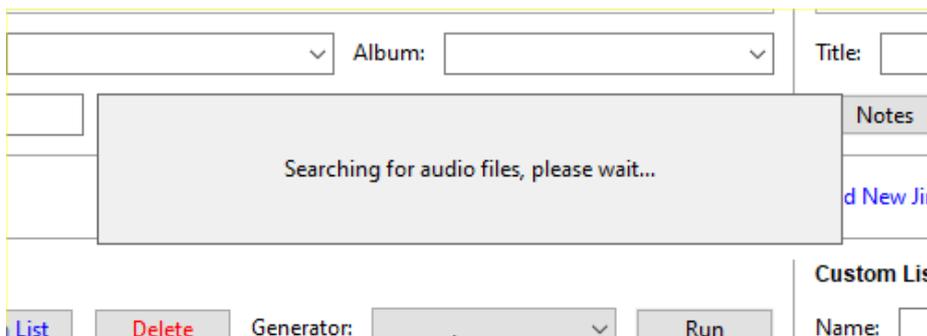
New music is added to the system by pressing the *Add New Music* button which is located on the left, mid-way down the main dialog.

The screenshot shows a dialog box for adding new music. At the top is a search bar. Below it are four input fields: 'Title', 'Artist', 'Genre' (with a dropdown arrow), and 'Year'. At the bottom left, there is a blue text label 'Add New Music:' followed by a grey button labeled 'Add'.

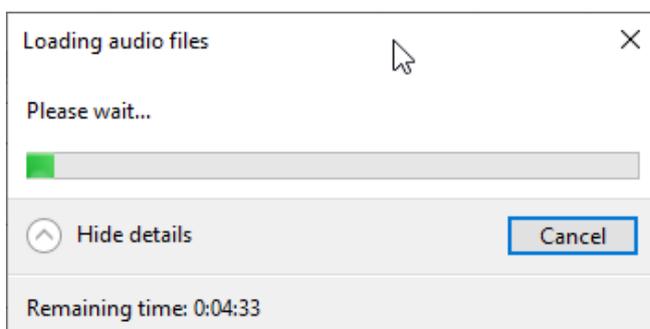
This will activate a standard Windows file dialog which you can then use to navigate to where your music files are located.



Once you have selected the folder, press OK to start the process. Playout Express will then generate a dialog similar to the following as it determines the number of files to be processed.

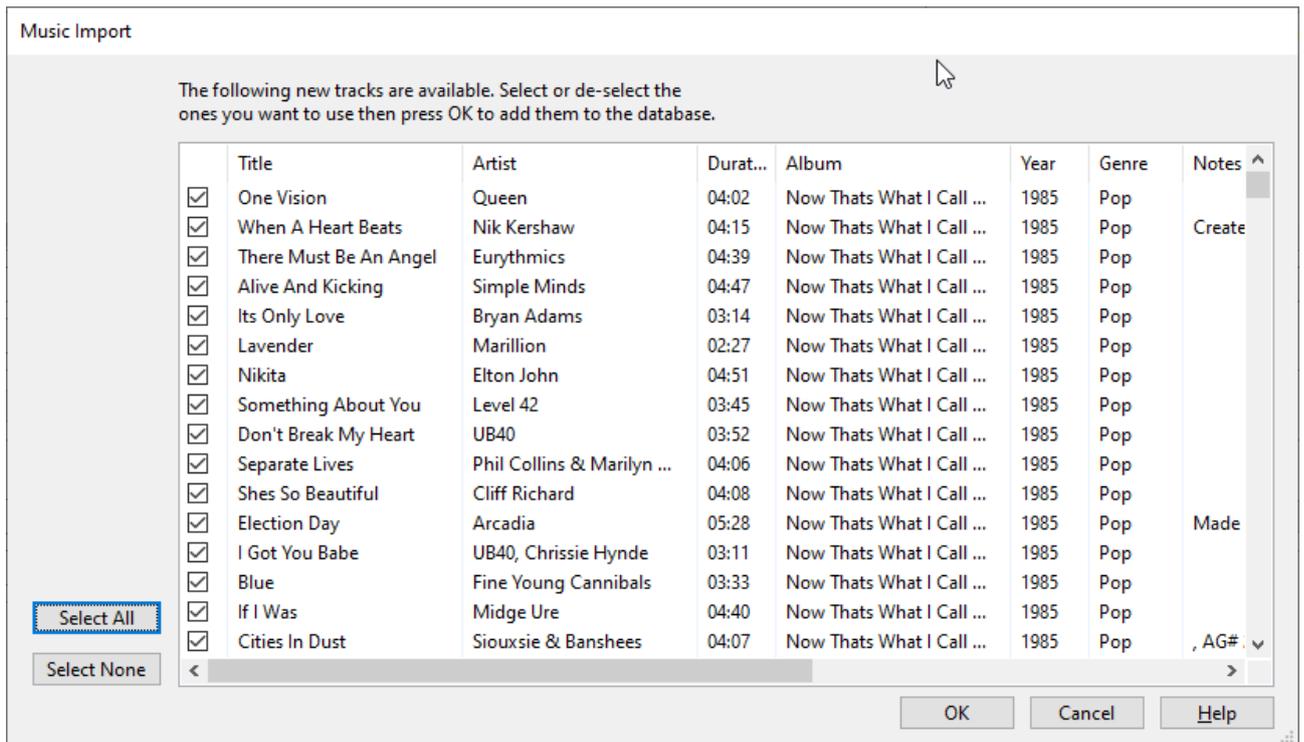


It will then start to process the audio files ready to load into the system.



This operation may take some time depending on the amount of audio files that are present in the folder you have selected. Once the process is complete, you are presented with a list of all the audio files that have been found in the folder (and any sub-folders) you selected. **Note that if you pressed the *Cancel* button during the *Loading audio files* process, the list will only include the files that were processed up to that point.**

If new music is present, it will list the new tracks details in the import window.



Playout Express will only list new music that is not already in the database so you do have to scan through existing tracks which have already been imported. At this point, the tracks have not been imported into the database; they are presented for information only. All that is required now to complete the import is to press the red *OK* button and the track information will be added to the database.

Before committing the update though it is worth going through some of the options that are available at this point.

3.2.1.1 Reviewing the track details for import

You can review the tracks selected for import by scrolling down the list displayed in the import window. The list utilises a similar layout to that of the Load dialog within Playout itself so you can sort and re-arrange the columns in the same manner – see sections 2.3.8.1.1 and 2.3.8.1.2 for more details.

All the tracks listed have a check box next to them which indicates whether the track will be imported or not when the *Update* button is pressed. You can exclude certain tracks by un-ticking the box. Alternatively, you can select or de-select all the items by pressing the *Select All* or *Select None* buttons appropriately.

3.2.2 Editing Music information

As noted earlier, all of the music that is available for use by OAS Payout is displayed in the top left panel of the main window.

Music

Search Title: Artist: Filter: Music

| Title | Artist | Durat... | Album | Year | Genre | Ni ^ |
|----------------|--------------------|----------|---------------------------|------|-------|------|
| Stand By Me | Oasis | 05:56 | Now Thats What I Call ... | 1997 | Pop | |
| Better Day | Ocean Colour Scene | 03:45 | Now Thats What I Call ... | 1997 | Pop | |
| Picture Of You | Boyzone | 03:23 | Now Thats What I Call ... | 1997 | Pop | |
| Don't Leave | Faithless | 03:11 | Now Thats What I Call ... | 1997 | Pop | |
| Raincloud | Lighthouse Family | 03:58 | Now Thats What I Call ... | 1997 | Pop | |
| Lonelv | Peter Andr | 03:45 | Now Thats What I Call ... | 1997 | Poo | |

Title: Artist: Album:

Genre: Year: X-Track New Music

Add New Music:

This panel allows you to change the information held on each track – it's title, artist, album details etc. This information is normally generated during the initial import process however it may be incorrect or missing. The editor is fairly straightforward to use, you simply modify the contents of (for example) the Title box, the key thing to note is that you must then press the *Enter* key to confirm the change.

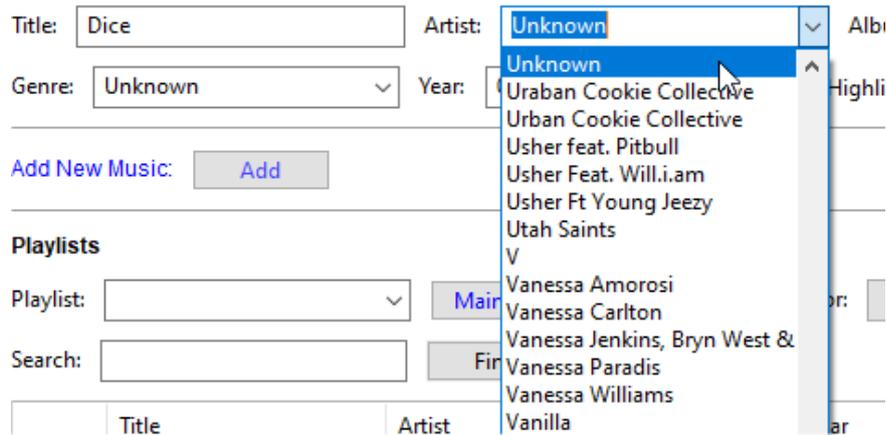
Any entries in the list that you have modified are highlighted in cyan.

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---------|-------|---------|
| 10 Robert Palmer | Unknown | 03:07 | Unknown |
| Bryan Adams - Summer... | Unknown | 03:34 | Unknown |
| Dice | Unknown | 03:48 | Unknown |
| hanson - Umm Bop | Unknown | 04:29 | Unknown |

Only when you press the red *Update* button is the changed actually written to the database and hence will be appear in the main Payout application.

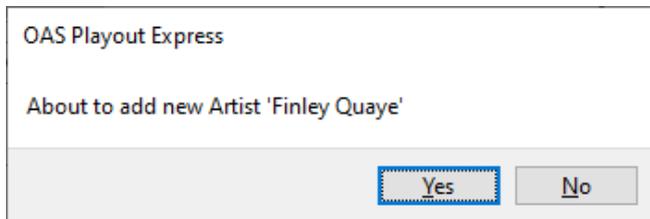
If you decide that you don't want to save the change, use the *Revert* button to discard it and reload the content back from the database.

The *Artist*, *Album* and *Genre* drop downs operate in a similar manner however you can also select these from existing lists by pressing the down arrow button next to the text box.



The screenshot shows a music management interface. At the top, there are input fields for 'Title' (containing 'Dice'), 'Artist' (with a dropdown menu open), 'Genre' (containing 'Unknown'), and 'Year'. The 'Artist' dropdown menu is open, showing a list of artists including 'Unknown', 'Urban Cookie Collective', 'Usher feat. Pitbull', 'Usher Feat. Will.i.am', 'Usher Ft Young Jeezy', 'Utah Saints', 'V', 'Vanessa Amorosi', 'Vanessa Carlton', 'Vanessa Jenkins, Bryn West &', 'Vanessa Paradis', 'Vanessa Williams', and 'Vanilla'. Below the input fields, there is an 'Add New Music' section with an 'Add' button. Further down, there is a 'Playlists' section with a 'Playlist' dropdown and a 'Search' input field. At the bottom, there is a table with columns for 'Title' and 'Artist'.

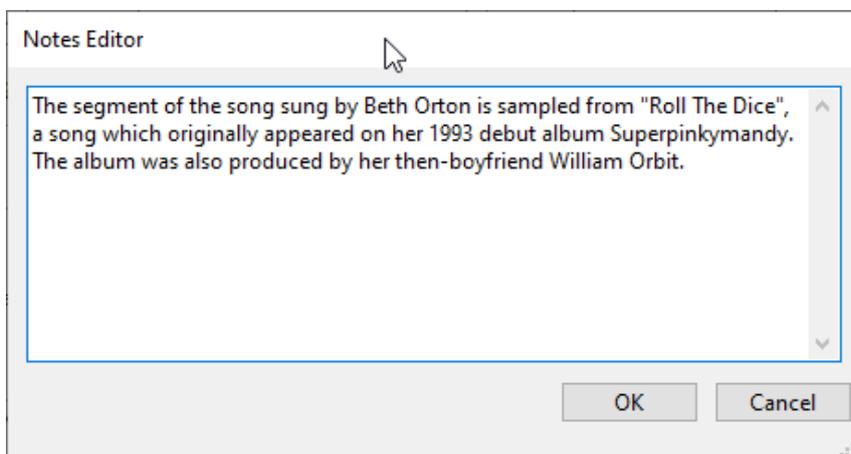
This helps to avoid the inclusion of multiple, similarly named artists in the system. If the item you want isn't in the list, you can simply type it into the box and press the *Enter* key.



The screenshot shows a confirmation dialog box. The title bar reads 'OAS Payout Express'. The main text says 'About to add new Artist 'Finley Quaye''. At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'Yes' and 'No'.

You'll be asked to confirm the addition, after which point it will be available in the list for future tracks.

You can also include additional information about each track by pressing the *Notes* button. This activates a dialog into which you can enter this additional information.



The screenshot shows a 'Notes Editor' dialog box. The title bar reads 'Notes Editor'. The main text area contains the following text: 'The segment of the song sung by Beth Orton is sampled from "Roll The Dice", a song which originally appeared on her 1993 debut album Superpinkymandy. The album was also produced by her then-boyfriend William Orbit.' At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'OK' and 'Cancel'.

Each music track may also be highlighted in one of 3 different colours which can be used to alert the presenter to something of significance about the track in question. For example, you may want to use one of them to indicate that the track in question has adult content. This is accomplished by checking either the *Highlight* or *Highlight 2* boxes.

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------|-------|---------------------|
| Don't You Love Me | Eternal | 03:48 | Now Thats What I Ca |
| You Have Placed A Chill... | Eurythmics | 03:48 | Greatest Hits |
| Dice | Finley Quaye | 03:48 | Unknown |
| Untouchable | Girls Aloud | 03:48 | Now Thats What I Ca |
| Firework | Katv Perry | 03:48 | Now That's What I C |

Title: Artist: Album:

Genre: Year: Highlight Highlight 2

3.2.2.1 Updating more than 1 track at a time

Most of the things you can change for a single track using the buttons on the edits page can be applied to multiple tracks. It typically involves selecting the tracks you wish to change (in a similar manner to loading multiple tracks into Playback – see section 2.3.8.4 or the online help) then applying the change in the same manner as with an individual track.

4 JINGLES AND OTHER AUDIO

This section covers how to handle all “non-music audio” with the Playout system. Typically, this would include station jingles, adverts, promotions or pre-recorded programmes. Mostly this would be material especially created for your station and as such isn’t ripped from commercial CDs. These are often referred to in Playout as “clips”.

The first part of this guide covers how to use Playout Express to load this audio then goes on to using it within Playout itself.

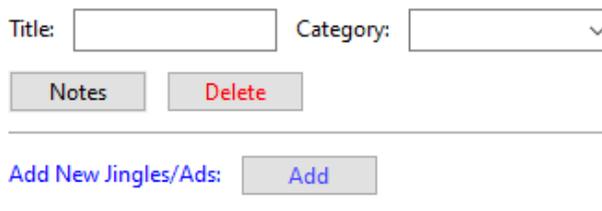
4.1 Manipulating Jingles in Playout Express

This section discusses the loading and editing of jingles and other miscellaneous audio within Playout Express.

4.1.1 Importing Jingles

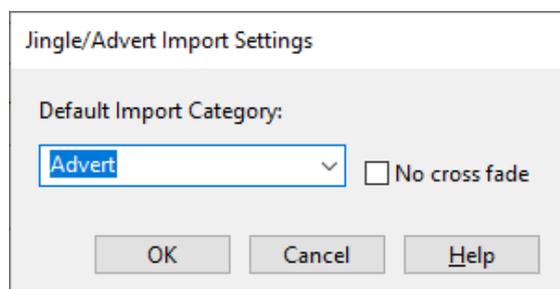
The Jingle Import process of Playout Express works in an almost identical fashion to its Music Import counterpart.

The import process works much as before however this time you by press the *Add New Jingles/Ads* button which is located on the right, mid-way down the main dialog.



The screenshot shows a form with two input fields: "Title:" followed by a text box and "Category:" followed by a dropdown menu. Below these are two buttons: "Notes" and "Delete". A horizontal line separates this section from the bottom section, which contains the text "Add New Jingles/Ads:" followed by an "Add" button.

Prior to selecting the new audio content to be added, Playout Express needs to know some information on how to handle it and this is entered in the *Jingle Import Settings* dialog which is activated upon pressing the *Add* button.



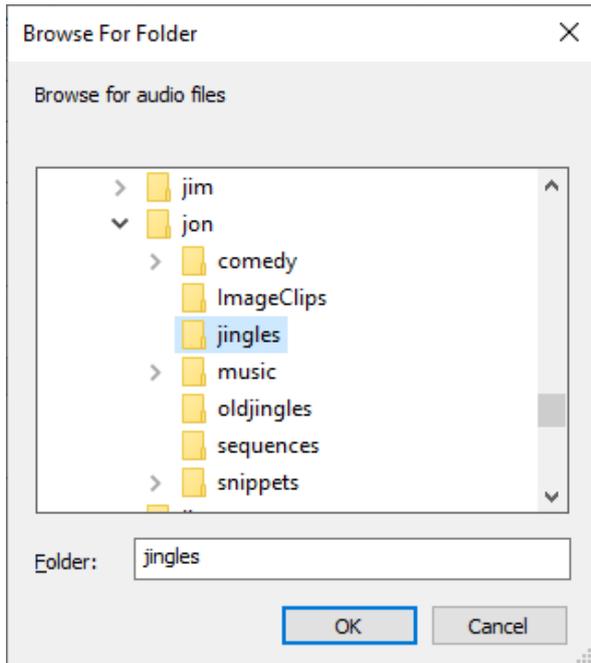
The screenshot shows a dialog box titled "Jingle/Advert Import Settings". It contains a label "Default Import Category:" above a dropdown menu with "Advert" selected. To the right of the dropdown is a checkbox labeled "No cross fade" which is currently unchecked. At the bottom of the dialog are three buttons: "OK", "Cancel", and "Help".

The main thing that needs to be decided here is how the audio that is about to be imported should be classified. Playout uses this information to group audio of similar types together – this is discussed further in section 4.2. There are two initial *categories* available for this purpose – *Advert* and *Jingle* however more can be added if required via the *Jingle* panel part of the main dialog. These will then be selectable as available categories in the above dialog.

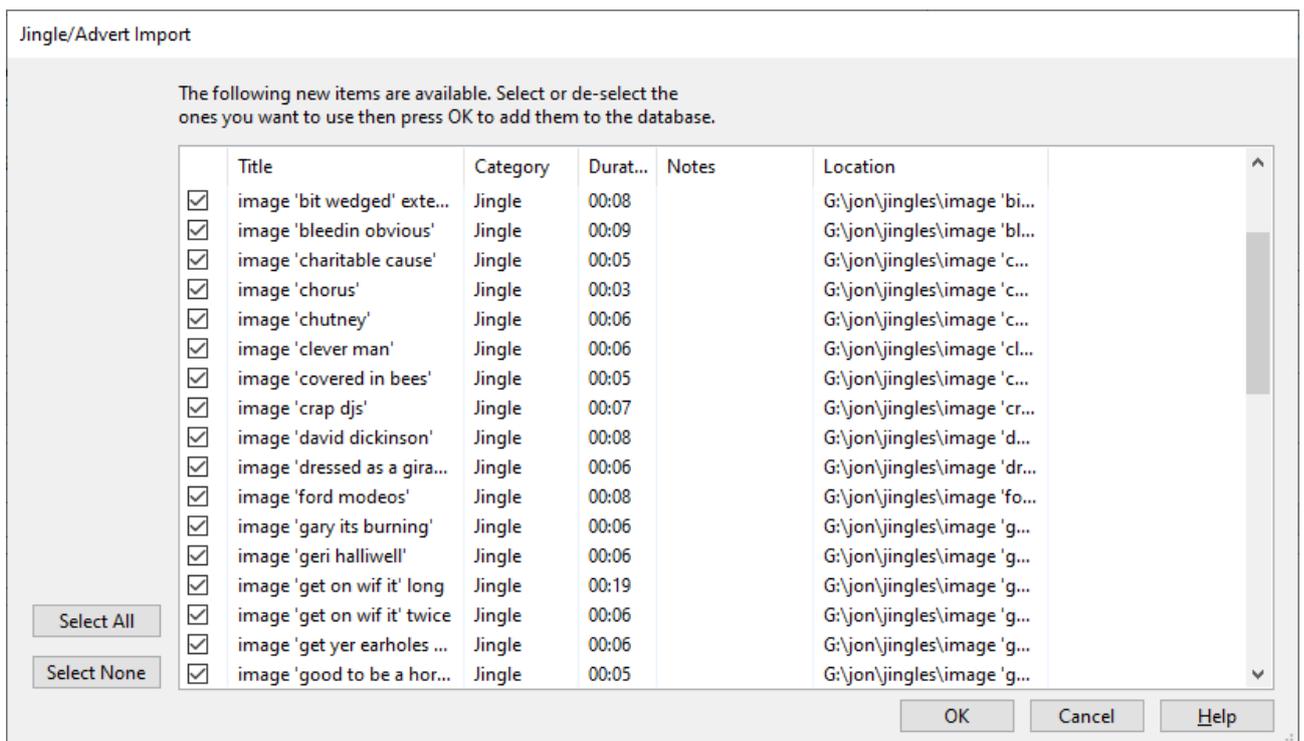
The *No cross fade* option controls the behaviour of the audio when it is being played in an automated mode of operation within Playout. For music, Playout will automatically cross fade the track that is just finishing with the next one that is to be played. This is also most likely the behaviour you want when playing jingles as well however for adverts, this probably isn't the correct behaviour. Generally speaking, these should play until completion therefore by checking this box, this will ensure that all the new items added will behave in this fashion.

There may be other criteria that affect your choice here but generally speaking, the box should be left unchecked when importing jingle and checked for adverts.

After clicking OK a standard Windows file dialog will be displayed which you can then use to navigate to where your jingle (or advert) files are located.



The import process then works much in the same vein as with music. Once the application has analysed the list of files in the location specified, you are presented with a list of them.



As when importing music, here you can choose to review the items and then commit them to the database by pressing the OK Button.

4.1.2 Editing Jingle/Advert information

Any non-music related content - jingles, adverts etc. that is available for use by OAS Payout is displayed in the top right panel of the main window.

Jingles/Adverts

Search:

| Title | Category | Durat... |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|
| dave nice - your listenin... | Other | 00:01 |
| image '85 on admin ext... | Jingle | 00:25 |
| image 'bang and the dir... | Jingle | 00:05 |
| image 'bit wedged' exte... | Jingle | 00:08 |
| image 'bleedin obvious' | Jingle | 00:09 |
| image 'charitable cause' | Jingle | 00:05 |

Title: Category:

Add New Jingles/Ads:

Here you can change the title of each clip by simply modifying the contents of the Title box, then press *Enter* to confirm the change. As with all editors, the change is not written to the database immediately, that only happens when you press the red *Update* button. You can also add custom information about the item via the *Notes* button.

You can also change the *Category* that the clip has been classified with by pressing the down arrow next to the *Category* box.

| Title | Category | Durat... |
|-------------------------|----------|----------|
| image 'bit wedged' e... | Jingle | 00:08 |
| image 'bleedin obvio... | Jingle | 00:09 |
| image 'charitable ca... | Advert | 00:05 |
| image 'chutney' | Jingle | 00:06 |
| image 'clever man' | Jingle | 00:06 |
| image 'covered in be... | Jingle | 00:05 |

Title: Category:

You can also add new categories to the system by typing the name you wish to use into the *Category* box and then press the *Enter* key.

OAS Payout Express

About to add new Category 'Station Ident'

You are asked to confirm the addition, after which it will appear in the list of available categories.

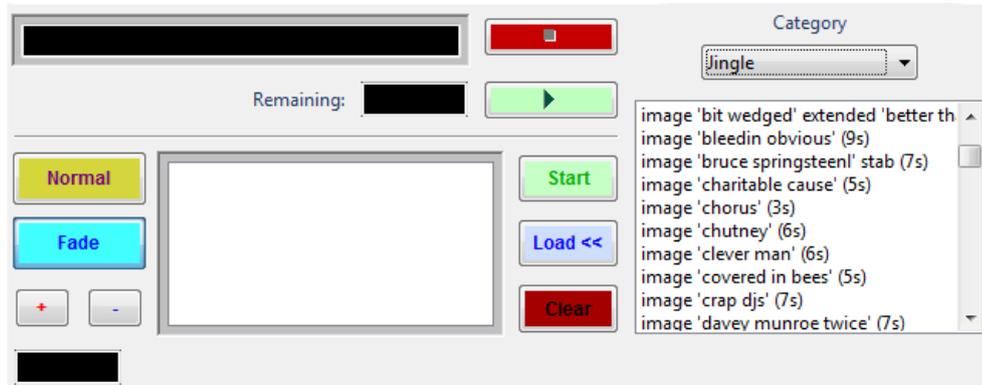
You can have as many categories in the system as you deem necessary however since they may all be selectable from within Playout it may be best not to have too many to avoid confusing the presenter.

In the same vein as the music editor, you can also make changes to multiple clips at the same time, see the help for more information.

4.2 Jingles in Playout – the Jingle Players

Time to switch back to Playout now and see how this audio is handled within the main package.

There are two independent *Jingle Players*, 1 per sound channel, each located underneath their counterpart Main Player. Located between the two players is the common *Jingle Selector*.



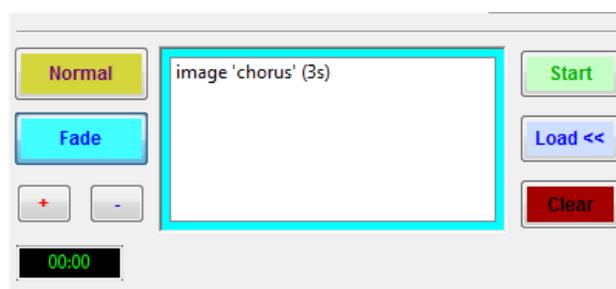
Jingle Player 1 and Jingle Selector

The *Jingle Selector* provides access to all the Jingles and other audio clips for a given Category. The list is sorted alphabetically. To select another category of audio simply pick one from the Category drop down list.

4.2.1 Loading and playing clips

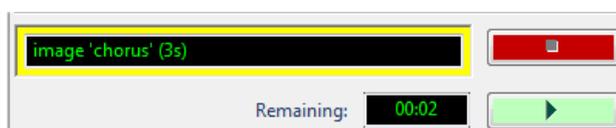
The Jingle Players operate in an almost identical manner to their Main Player counterpart so this will only touch on the key aspects and differences of the players.

Clips are loaded by selecting the desired track in the Jingle Selector with the mouse, then pressing the *Load* button on the appropriate player.



The border of the console is changed to light blue to indicate clips are loaded and available for playback. You can then play the clip by pressing the *Start* button.

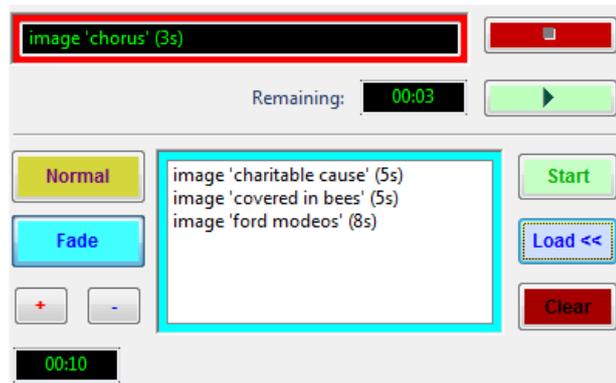
Once a track is playing, you can use the top set of controls to stop, pause and resume the clip in a similar manner to the Main Player.



In a similar vein, the colour of the border also changes to reflect the current mode, green for playback, yellow for paused and red for stopped.

When the clip has completed playback, the console is cleared but it is not added to the history dialog.

You can add as many clips as you like to the player, each time you load a new clip it is added to the bottom of the list.



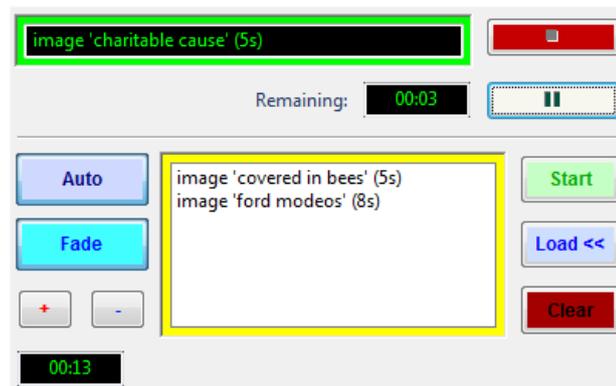
The time displayed in the box displayed in the bottom left-hand corner gives the total time of tracks loaded in the player.

Clips are played out sequentially ie. the topmost one first, the exception to this is if you use the mouse to highlight a specified clip, it will play out instead – as in the above example the final entry in the list would be played out instead of the first.

The *Clear* button works in a similar manner, first select the clip you wish to remove then press the button to remove it.

The +/- buttons allow you to move clips around the list – the '+' button shuffles a clip up whilst the '-' moves it down the list.

The Player also has *Normal* and *Auto* modes of operation and you can toggle between modes of operation by pressing the *Normal* button on the console.



When the player is in *Auto* mode, once you hit the Start button (or if a clip is already playing), it will automatically begin playback of the next clip in the list and continue in this manner until manually stopped or the list is complete.

As with the Main Player, the border colour of the console changes to yellow to indicate clips are loaded and available for execution.

An important difference between this and the Main Player is that the Jingle Players will not cross-fade clips, if you start playback of a clip whilst one is playing, the previous one will be stopped immediately and the new one started.

4.2.2 Interaction with the Main Player – auto fading

The Main and Jingle players operate independently – that is you can play audio in the Main Player and the Jingle Player simultaneously. For a given channel (eg. Main Player 1 and Jingle Player 1) the audio output will be mixed together.

You can use the Fade button on the Jingle Player to automatically fade (or “duck”) the output volume of the Main Player such that the jingle or clip may be heard clearly over the main music channel – this way you can play a short station ident jingle (or “stab”) over the intro of a song. Once the clip (or clips) have completed, the volume level is restored.

The Jingle Players default to performing this auto fade, to disable the feature press the Fade button on the player.

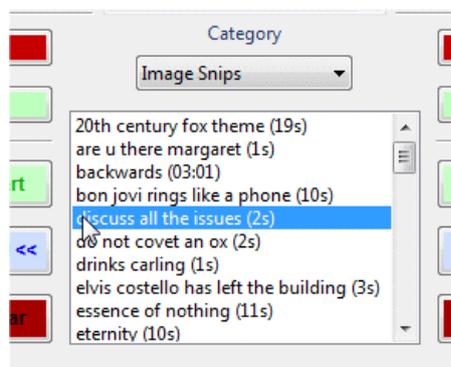


Auto Fade disabled

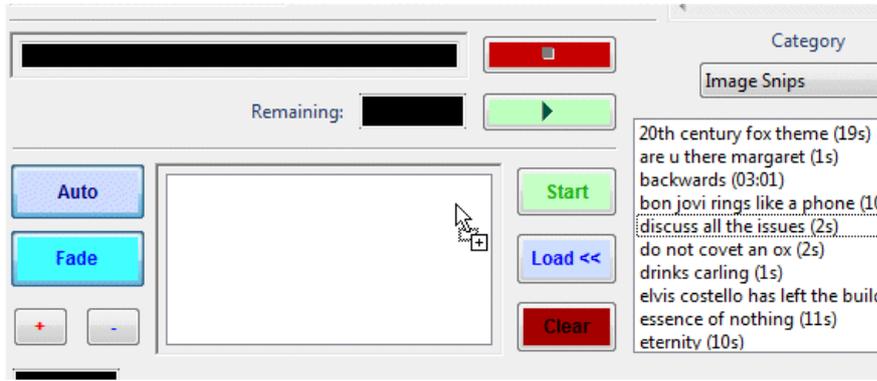
4.2.3 Loading Jingles – the drag ‘n drop way

If you have a degree of experience with Windows, you may have come across the term “drag ‘n drop” before. In straightforward terms this is the ability to use the mouse to click on an “item” somewhere on the screen, press the left mouse button and “drag” it across the display before releasing the mouse button (“dropping” it). It’s often used to move files or documents around the system.

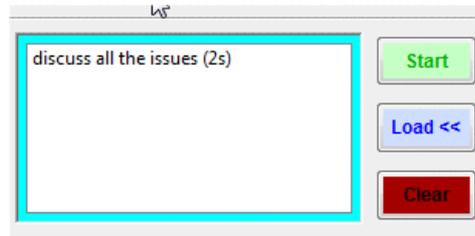
Playout supports this “drag n drop” approach with the Jingle Selector – to begin with you highlight the clip which is to be loaded in the selector, then hold the left mouse button down and proceed to move the cursor to either of the Jingle Players.



The mouse cursor changes shape during this process. When the cursor is placed over the Jingle Player, release the left mouse button.

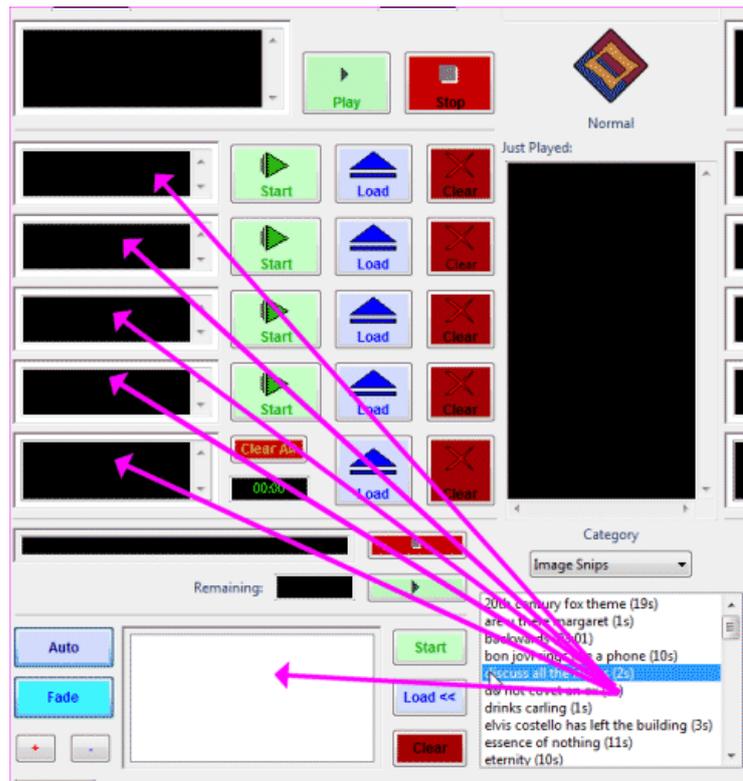


The Jingle is now loaded into the player – the same as if you had pressed the *Load* button.



Whether you opt to use this approach or stick with the Load button mechanism is entirely down to preference. Some people feel the drag 'n' drop approach is more intuitive and easier to adopt than others.

One of the distinct advantages of this is that the "dropping" of jingles is not limited to the Jingle Consoles; you can in fact drop a jingle into any of the Main Player panels as the following diagram illustrates.

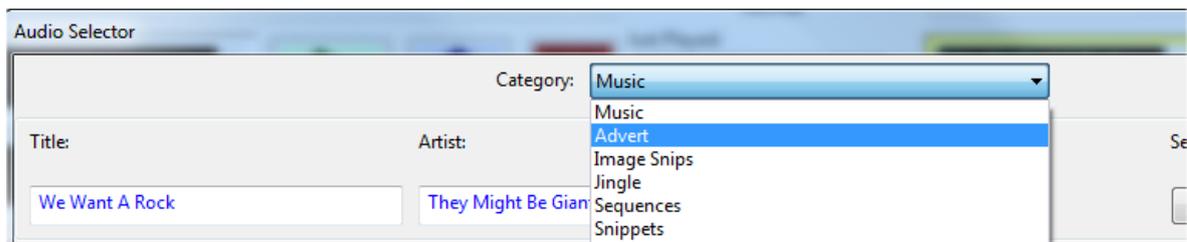


Jingle 'drop' targets

4.2.4 Jingles in the Main Player

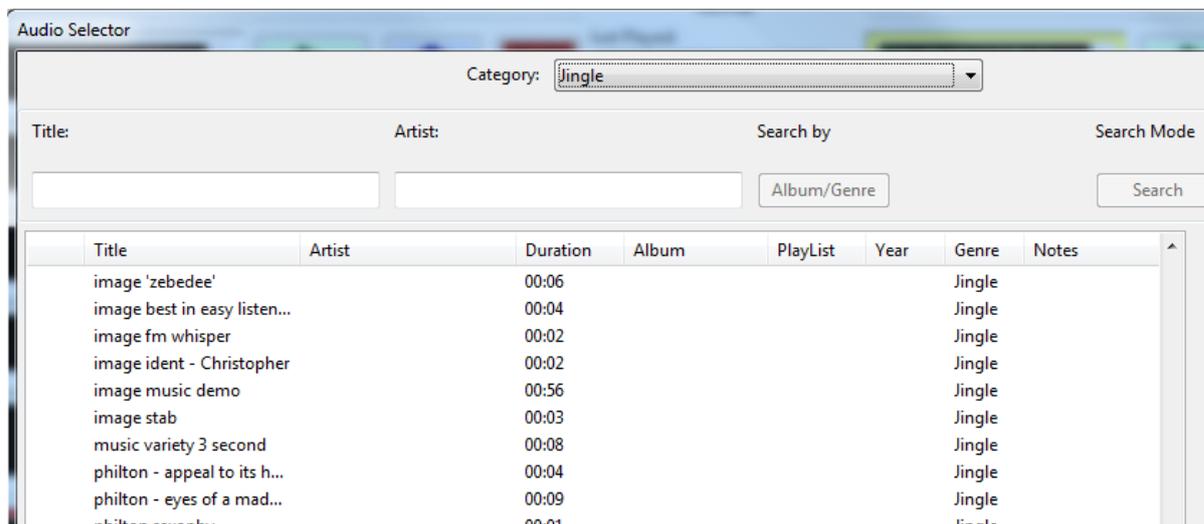
The last section touched upon the fact that jingles may also be played in the Main Players – in fact any of the audio available in the Jingle Selector may also be loaded and played by a Main Player. You can either use the drag 'n' drop approach identified in the prior section or they may be loaded using the player's own *Load* button.

Recall the Load Dialog discussed in section 2.3.8 – at the top of the dialog is a drop-down list labelled *Category*. By default, this is set to Music, giving you access to all the music tracks loaded into *Playlist*. However, if you expand this list, you will see it also contains the Categories available within the *Jingle Selector* and jingle editor pane of *Playlist Express*.



Category Selector

By selecting a new category, you will gain access to all of the audio stored under that category.



You'll note many of the fields are blank since they are not applicable for anything other than music. However, you can perform the same set of functions for loading and manipulating audio as you could for the music list.

Whether you use the Main Players to play anything other than music is entirely down to you, some users tend to use the Main Players for all audio playback, ignoring the Jingle Players completely whilst others use it for say Jingles only, using the Jingle Players for advert only playback – it is entirely up to you.

5 CUSTOM AUDIO LISTS AND THE BUTTON WALL

This section discusses the creation of *Custom Audio Lists* which may be used to create specific combinations of jingles and other audio clips and are also used for the *Button Wall* feature.

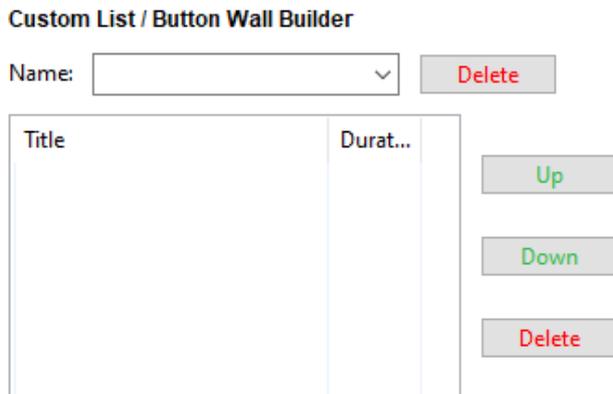
5.1 About Custom Audio Lists

Custom Audio lists are only used with the Jingles and other miscellaneous audio – that which is loaded and maintained in Playout Express in the *Custom List / Button Wall Builder* pane. They allow you to create different unique sets of audio selections from any different Category of audio – items in a Custom List can come from any number of categories.

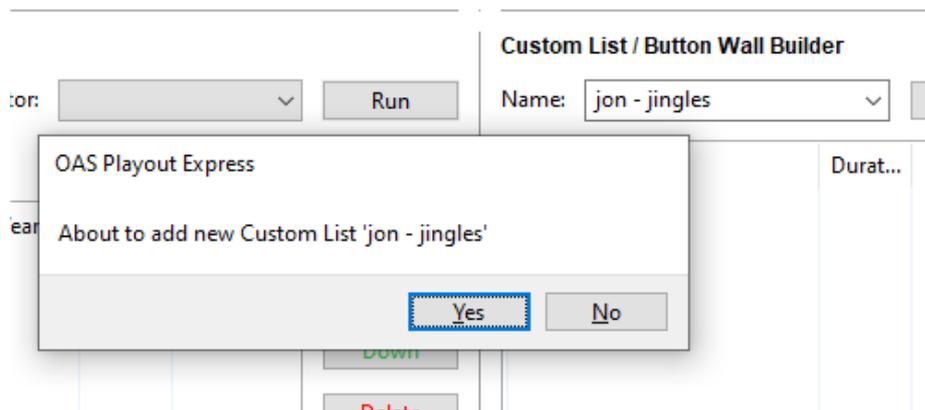
The principal aim is to allow you to create a specific list of commonly used audio which can be accessed quickly and easily by the presenter. For example, you may well have a fairly extensive jingle library, containing multiple idents for all of your presenters – this creates quite a lengthy list of audio under the category “Jingles”, of which many may well be totally inapplicable for a given presenter. As a way around this, you could create multiple categories of jingle but a cleaner way is to allow each presenter to create a custom audio list, only including in his or her list the jingles which are applicable to them. They can then navigate and find the jingle significantly quicker when on air.

5.2 Creating Custom Lists in Playout Express

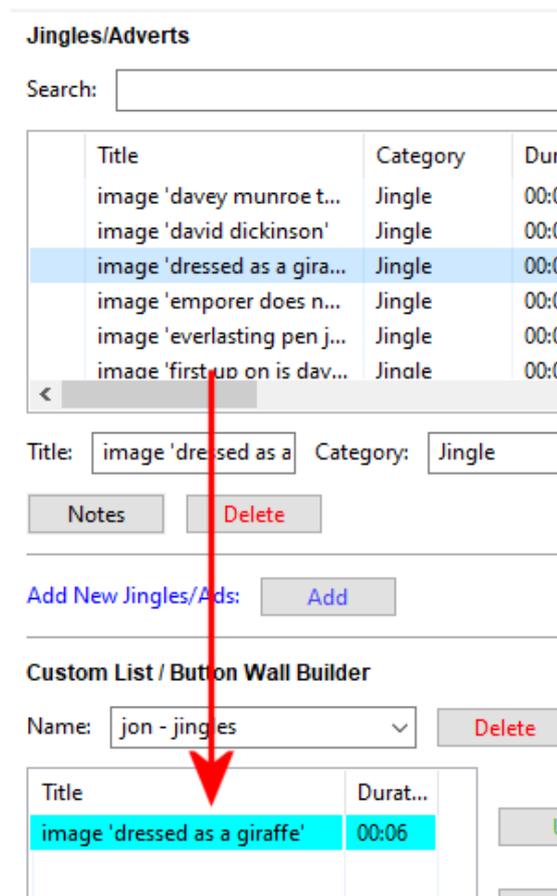
Custom Lists are created in Playout Express in the bottom right-hand panel of the main dialog window.



First, you create a unique name for your list by typing it into the *Name* drop down box, and then press the Enter key to confirm the creation of a new list.



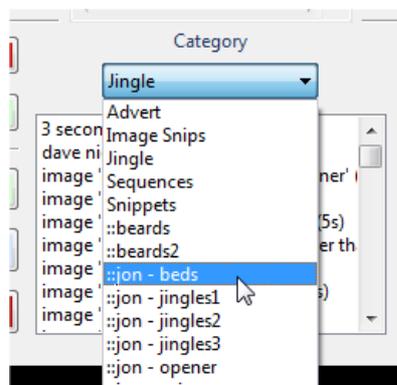
Now you can add any item you choose from the Jingle list by navigating down the list and double clicking the jingle to be added. Each time you do this, the jingle will be added to the custom audio list being created.



You can add as many items as you like to the list and create as many lists as you like. When the list is completed, press the *Update* button to transfer the information to the database.

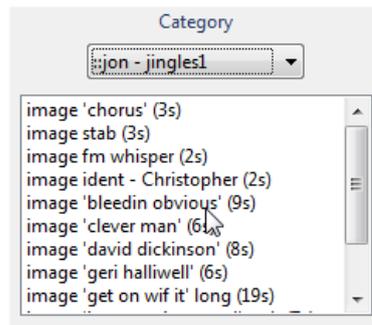
5.3 Using Custom Audio Lists in Playout

Custom Audio lists are accessed from the Jingle Selector's category drop down.



Custom Lists are always prefixed by a double colon ':::' and always follow the main category list in alphabetical order.

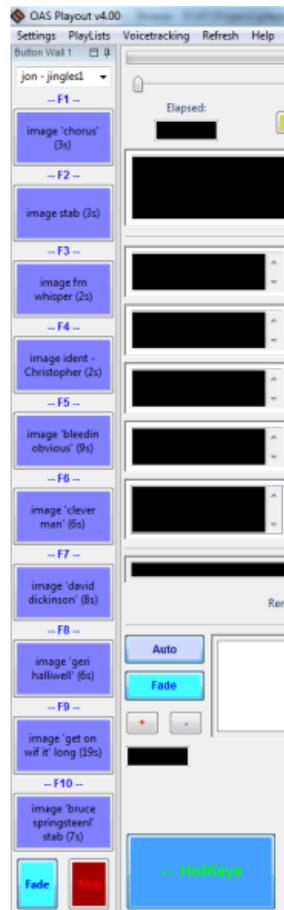
Once you select a list, the items will be accessible through the Jingle Selector.



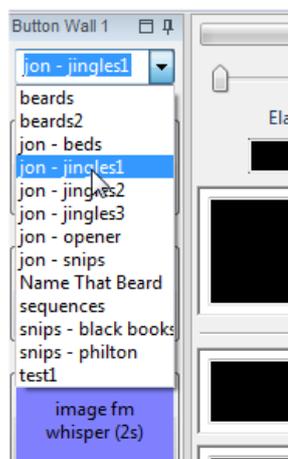
Custom lists are not accessible via the Main Players.

5.4 The Button Walls

Playout's *Button Walls* allows for the instantaneous playback of a jingle or other audio clip from a dialog consisting of 10 pre-set buttons (12 if undocked, see 5.5). These run vertically alongside each of the Main and Jingle Players.

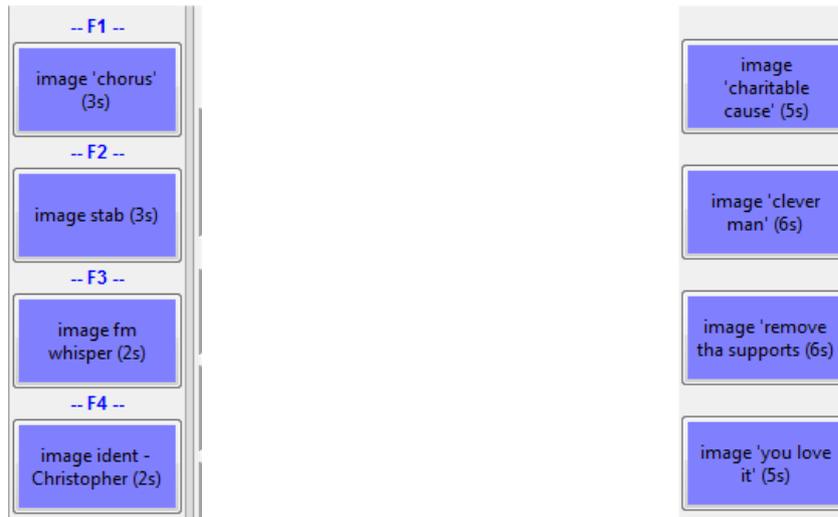


The definition of the buttons is taken from a *Custom Audio List* which is selectable from the drop down displayed at the top of the dialog.



Only the first 10 items (12 if undocked, see 5.5) from a cliplist will be displayed in the button wall, therefore the order the items are created in Playout Express will dictate how they appear on the wall.

To play the audio associated with a button, simply left click the mouse on the relevant button. It's also possible to use a keyboard shortcut in the form of one of the function keys (these are the **F** keys running along the top of the keyboard). Only one of the Button Walls is associated with the keyboard shortcuts at any time – you can determine which one because the button wall will have the associated function key displayed above the button.



The *Hotkey Button Wall Selector* (the large blue button underneath each Jingle Player) is used to select which Button Wall has the function keys assigned – the following shows the default configuration where the function keys are assigned to Button Wall 1.



In order to switch the assignments to the other Button Wall, press the *Hotkey Button Wall Selector* adjacent to Button Wall 2 (labelled Hotkey Button Wall 2).

The button wall also supports an auto-fade function which operates identically to its Jingle Player counterpart (see section 4.2.2). Playback of all 3 players simultaneously is supported, however the auto fade feature will only fade the Main Players volume ie. the Button Wall will not fade the Jingle Player and vice versa.

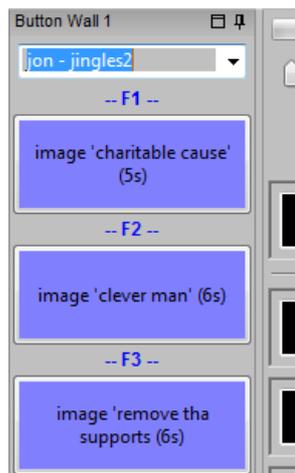
The Button Wall colour scheme can be changed via the *Settings, Button Wall* menu item of *Playout* – see the online help for more information.

5.5 Moving and Resizing the Button Wall

The width of each of the Button Walls is adjustable which allows you to expand or contract the size of each of the walls (and conversely, expand or contract the size of the remainder of the *Playout* window). This is accomplished by positioning the mouse between the edge of the Button Wall and the Main/Jingle Players until the mouse cursor is replaced by a double headed arrow.



Now press the left-hand mouse button and move the mouse to the left/right – release the button when the size is as required.

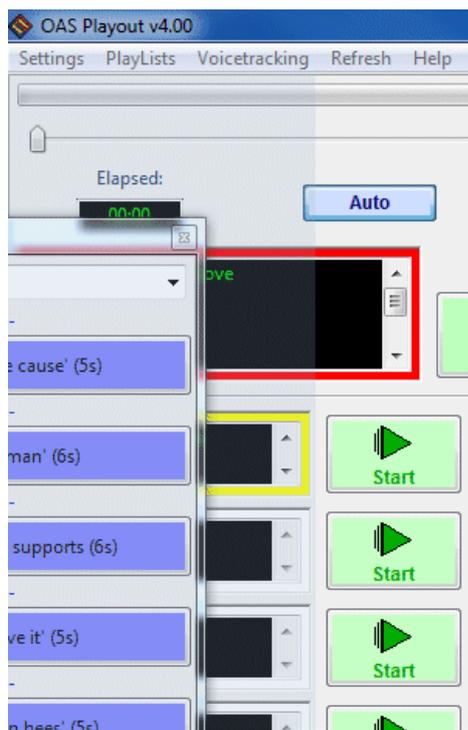


Each button wall is also detachable from the main Playout window allowing you to position it where you like; this can be useful for dual monitor systems where you can move one or both of the Button Walls to the other display. It also allows an extra two buttons to be used (shortcuts via the F11 and F12 keys). This is accomplished by moving the mouse over the title bar; press and hold the left mouse button then drag the window.



Once the Button Wall has been “undocked”, it can be moved around the screen and resized as required.

In order to “dock” the Button Wall back with the main Playout window, drag it back towards the left (or right) of the windows and wait for a blue shadow to appear around the Window. At which point, release the mouse button and it should snap back into place.

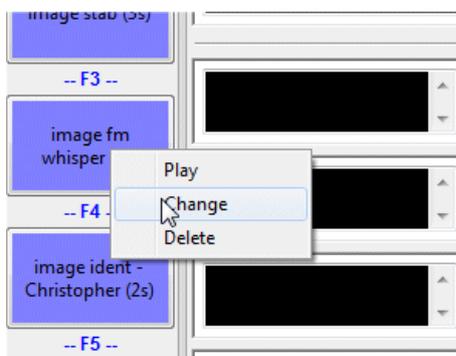


5.6 Altering Button Wall definitions in Playout

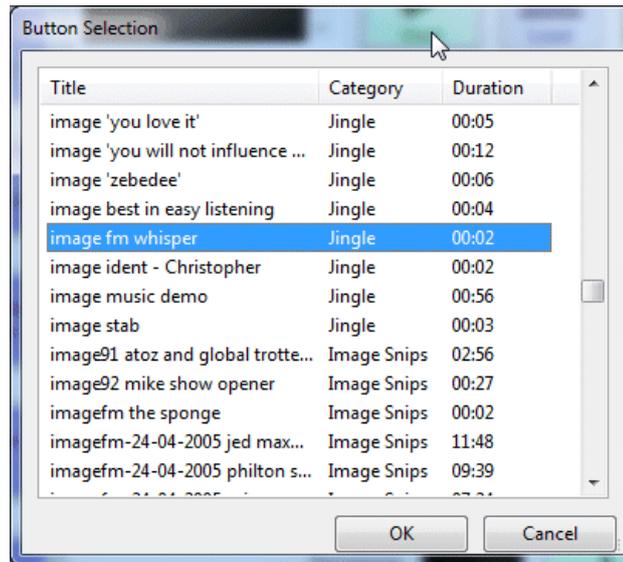
The sets and definitions of Button Walls can be changed through Playout Express’s Custom List editor as has already been discussed however it is possible and often more convenient to be able to change the definitions within Playout such that the presenter can alter them on the fly.

5.6.1 Changing the clip associated with a button

To change the audio assigned to a button, move the mouse over the relevant button and press the RH button.



From the popup menu displayed, choose *Change*. This will display a dialog listing all the audio available for selection into the button.

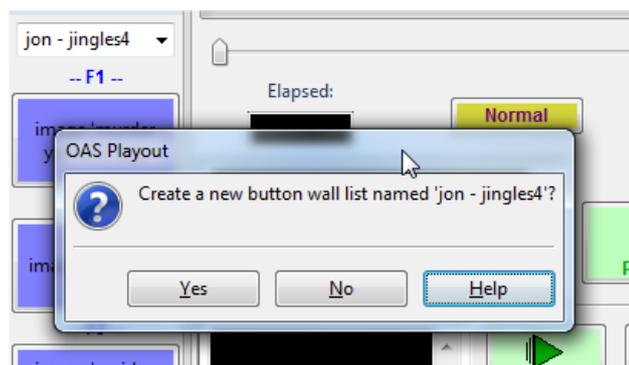


Button wall selection dialog

As with many of these styles of dialogs you can sort and re-arrange the available selections to assist in tracking down the clip you wish to associate with the button. Press OK when done.

5.6.2 Creating a new Button Wall Set

To create a new button wall set (in essence a new custom audio list), type the name of the new set to create in the drop down list at the top of the button wall dialog.



If you confirm the creation of a new list, a set of blank buttons will be created. From there you can then assign the audio to each button in turn. Note that you must set the buttons in order, you cannot set say button 1 then button 5.

5.7 List Filters

You may notice that any Custom Lists created by the Button Wall (using the process described in the previous section) do not appear in the *Jingle Selector* panel within Playout. This is because; by default, these lists are created such that they are only available within the button wall using a process called *filtering*. The filters within Playout allow you to pick and choose which Categories, Custom Lists and Playlists (which will be discussed next) are visible within various aspects of Playout. This helps prevent there being an excess of items selectable, many of which are redundant in that context, as in this example it is possible to exclude jingle sets which are exclusively for Button Walls from appearing in the Jingle Selector. The reverse also holds true ie. It is possible to exclude custom lists from the Button Walls.

Filters can be adjusted and set within Playout Express from the *Settings, Filters* menu. Look in the online help under *Filters* for more information.

6 PLAYLISTS

Within OAS Playout, a *Playlist* consists of a list of any audio item that is present in the database, so they can include music, jingles, anything. A Playlist is designed to be a fixed ordered list that is played out in a sequential manner ie. you start from the first item in the list and work through until the list is complete. This is in contrast, to say a Custom Audio List which you can pick items at random from at any time.

You can create and maintain as many Playlists as you like.

Each entry in a playlist has something called a *Play Count* associated with it. Principally this is a counter to indicate whether the item in the list has been played or not. When the list has been created, every Play Count is set to zero(0) to indicate "unplayed". As you use play out each entry in the list, the Count is increased by 1 to indicate "played". The list is deemed complete once all items are "played".

PlayLists can be useful for a number of different scenarios within a radio station but the two most obvious ones are:

- To form a *running order* for the presenter. As a presenter you may be responsible for putting together the music you intend to play during your show. As such, you can create a playlist which lists those songs you intend to play in the order you need to. The software will also give an indication of how long the total duration of the PlayList is. Then, as you run through your show you simply play out the next highlighted track in the list, removing the need to search for and add the tracks from the main music store. This type of playlist probably will just include music rather than jingles or similar (the exception being you may wish to include some sort of pre-recorded "feature" in the list), these will be played out manually at given intervals by the presenter.

A radio station itself may enforce a running order which the presenters should follow, this can be in the form of a significantly larger playlist from which the presenter simply picks the next item from the list and plays it out.

- For *automation* purposes. If you need to have periods of unattended operation, you can create a playlist which Playout will automatically execute, in order to meet this purpose. In this instance, you will most likely want to include jingles (and possibly ad breaks) in the list. You can invoke playback of an automated playlist at any time, restarting the list from scratch (if desired) on completion.

6.1 Creating a Playlist in Playout Express

Playlists are created and managed in the bottom left-hand panel of the main dialog window.

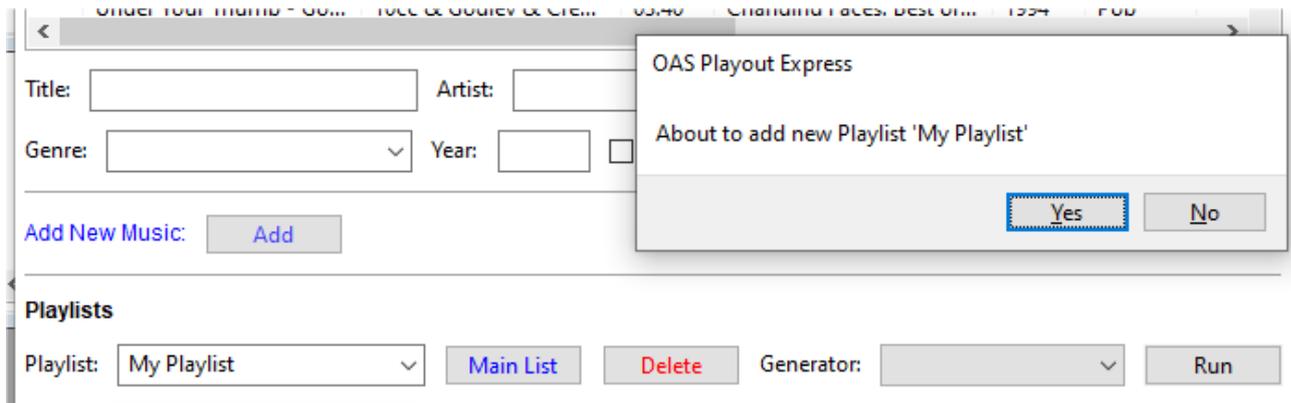
Playlists

Playlist: Generator:

Search: by:

| Title | Artist | Durat... | Genre | Year | Count | Album | Count: <input type="text"/> |
|-------|--------|----------|-------|------|-------|-------|---|
| | | | | | | | <input type="button" value="Up"/> |
| | | | | | | | <input type="button" value="Down"/> |
| | | | | | | | <input type="button" value="Delete"/> |
| | | | | | | | <input type="button" value="Clear List"/> |

To begin, you first create a new playlist by typing it into the *Playlists* box and pressing the *Enter* key.



This will create a new, blank Playlist. Now you can begin adding audio to the list. Navigate through either the music or jingle list, then when you locate a track or clip you want to add to the list, just double click on it with the left mouse button. It will be appended to the bottom of the Playlist.

| | Title | Artist | Durat... | Album | Year | Genre | Not ^ |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------------|------|-------|-------|
| | Heart Of The House | Alanis Morissette | 03:46 | Supposed Former Infatu... | 1998 | Rock | ED1 |
| | I Was Hoping | Alanis Morissette | 03:50 | Supposed Former Infatu... | 1998 | Rock | ED1 |
| | Joining You | Alanis Morissette | 04:24 | Supposed Former Infatu... | 1998 | Rock | ED1 |
| | One | Alanis Morissette | 04:39 | Supposed Former Infatu... | 1998 | Rock | ED1 |
| | So Pure | Alanis Morissette | 02:51 | Supposed Former Infatu... | 1998 | Rock | ED1 |
| | Sympathetic Character | Alanis Morissette | 05:12 | Supposed Former Infatu... | 1998 | Rock | ED1 |

Title: Artist: Album:

Genre: Year: Highlight Highlight 2

Add New Music:

Playlists

Playlist: Generator:

Search: by:

| | Title | Artist | Durat... | Genre | Year | Count | Album | Count: |
|---|-------------|-------------------|----------|-------|------|-------|------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Joining You | Alanis Morissette | 04:24 | Rock | 1998 | 0 | Supposed F | <input type="text"/> |

You can carry on adding as many tracks and clips as you like to the list.

The dialog at the bottom right of the list will give a running total of the *approximate* duration of the list.

| Durat... | Genre | Year | Count | Album |
|----------|--------|------|-------|-------------|
| 04:24 | Rock | 1998 | 0 | Supposed F |
| 00:06 | Jingle | | 0 | |
| 04:29 | Pop | 0 | 0 | Now Thats V |
| 03:44 | Pop | 2008 | 0 | Now Thats V |
| 03:02 | Pop | 2000 | 0 | Now Thats V |
| 03:00 | Pop | 2008 | 0 | Now Thats V |

Count:

Up

Down

Delete

Clear List

18:45

Use the *Delete* button to remove items from the list.

You can insert items anywhere in the list by first highlighting the item immediately before where you want to add the new item, and then double click the track/clip in the usual manner.

| | Title | Artist | Durat... | Genre |
|---|------------------------|-------------------|----------|--------|
| 1 | Joining You | Alanis Morissette | 04:24 | Rock |
| 2 | image 'geri halliwell' | | 00:06 | Jingle |
| 3 | Yellow | Coldplay | 04:29 | Pop |
| 4 | Spotlight | Jennifer Hudson | 03:44 | Pop |
| 5 | Imagine | John Lennon | 03:02 | Pop |

Before insert...

| | Title | Artist | Durat... | Genre | Year | Count | Albu |
|---|------------------------|-------------------|----------|--------|------|-------|------|
| 1 | Joining You | Alanis Morissette | 04:24 | Rock | 1998 | 0 | Supp |
| 2 | image 'geri halliwell' | | 00:06 | Jingle | | 0 | |
| 3 | Yellow | Coldplay | 04:29 | Pop | 0 | 0 | Now |
| 4 | Spotlight | Jennifer Hudson | 03:44 | Pop | 2008 | 0 | Now |
| 5 | I Predict A Riot | Kaiser Chiefs | 03:53 | Rock | 2005 | 0 | Emp |
| 6 | Imagine | John Lennon | 03:02 | Pop | 2000 | 0 | Now |

After insert.

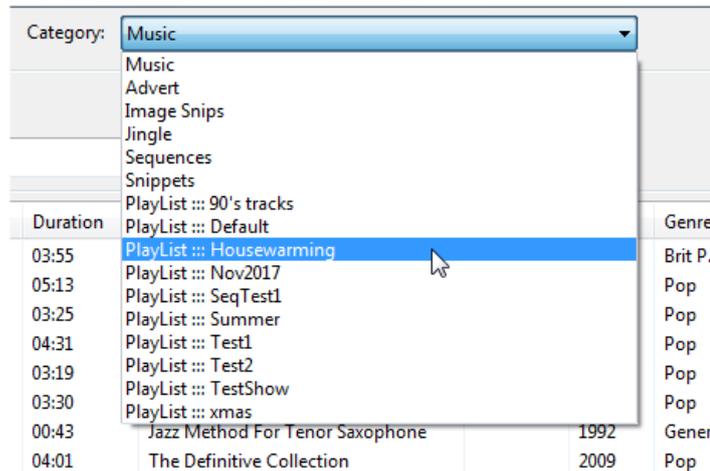
Press the red *Update* button to save your changes to the database.

6.2 Using PlayLists in Playout

Playlists can be executed manually within Playout (as is the case when following a running order) and automatically with Playout's *automation sequencer*.

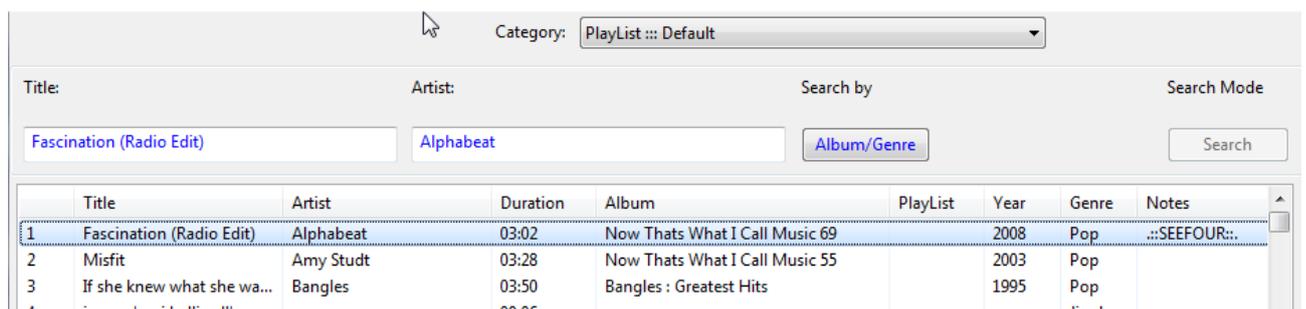
6.2.1 Manually loading Playlists

Playlists are only accessible through the Main Player; they appear in the Category list in the *Load* dialog.



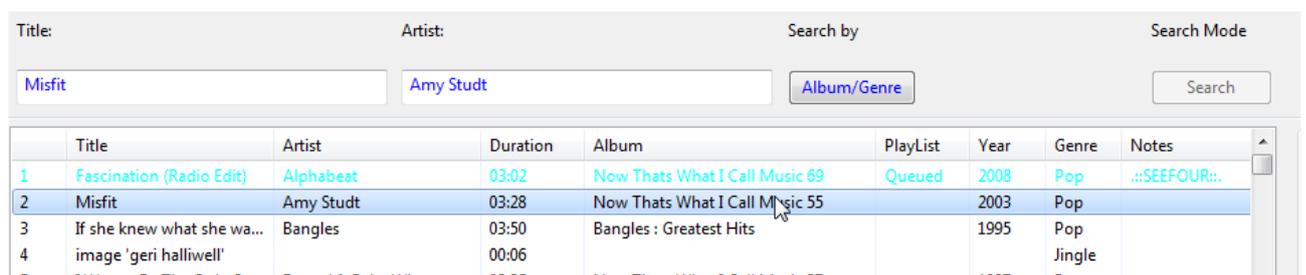
Playlists appear at the end of the category list and are all prefixed as "PlayList::" followed by the name of the list you created in Playout.

When you select a playlist, Playout will automatically highlight for you the next unplayed item in the list. For a new playlist, this will be the first item in the list.



Therefore, all you need do is to press the OK button to load this track into the player.

The next time a load button is pressed, Playout will highlight the next unplayed track for you to select.



Playout utilises the *PlayList* column in the selector to indicate the following:

- The text *Played* indicates the track has already been (or is in the process of) played. The number next to this field indicates how many times it has been played – normally just the once. The selection is also highlighted green.
- The text *Queued* indicates the track is loaded into a panel ready for play back. The selection is highlighted yellow.

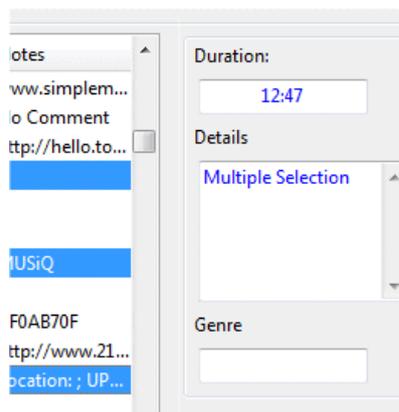
| Title: | | Artist: | | Search by | | Search Mode | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|----------|--------------------------------|----------|-------------|--------|---------------|
| If she knew what she wants | | Bangles | | Album/Genre | | Search | | |
| | Title | Artist | Duration | Album | PlayList | Year | Genre | Notes |
| 1 | Fascination (Radio Edit) | Alphabeat | 03:02 | Now Thats What I Call Music 69 | Played 1 | 2008 | Pop | ...:SEEFOUR:: |
| 2 | Misfit | Amy Studt | 03:28 | Now Thats What I Call Music 55 | Played 1 | 2003 | Pop | |
| 3 | If she knew what she wa... | Bangles | 03:50 | Bangles : Greatest Hits | | 1995 | Pop | |
| 4 | image 'aeri halliwell' | | 00:06 | | | | Jingle | |

You are not forced to play tracks from the playlist in the order; you can pick and choose any of them from the list (including those that have previously been played).

You can use the multiple selection techniques covered in section 2.3.8.4 to load as many entries from a playlist as required.

6.2.2 Automation

You can use playlists to support *automation* within Playout. Automation is where tracks, jingles and other audio are played out in a “back to back” sequence by the system without presenter intervention. You can achieve this by putting Playout into *Auto* mode (see section 2.3.9) and manually loading enough tracks from the playlist to support the duration required for automation into the player. When you select more than 1 track in the Load dialog, the panel to the right of the track list gives an indication of the total duration of all the selected tracks.



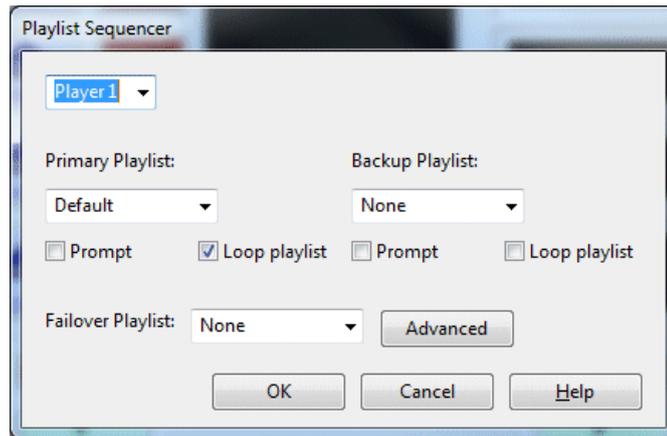
Load Dialog – total track duration

The figure displayed next to the multi-play panel will also provide this information for all the tracks loaded into the play panels.



However, it is by far easier to make use of Playout’s dedicated *automation sequencer*. With this, you can leave the loading and playback totally to the system.

The Automation Sequencer only works with playlists that have been pre-prepared with Playout Express. First, you need to define which playlist(s) are to be used by the sequencer – this is achieved from the *PlayLists, Setup* menu item within Playout itself.



Automation Setup

Playout allows for two playlists to be used for automation although in practice you will probably only need to use one except for more advanced capabilities.

Select from the list labelled *Primary Playlist* the playlist you wish to use for automation. If you want the software to automatically play the list again when it completes, check the *Loop playlist* button.

If you want to set a 2nd playlist, select this from the *Backup Playlist*. In this instance make sure you do **not** check the Loop Playlist button for the primary list since this will mean the backup list will never be played.

When done, press the OK button.

To start automation, from the *Playlists* menu choose *Start*. After a confirmation prompt, Playout will enter automation mode on Player 1 – automation is not supported on player 2. Playout then performs the following:

- All of the controls for Player 1 are disabled (greyed out) so the player cannot be inadvertently stopped.
- The player is put into *Auto* mode.
- The next few tracks from the playlist are loaded into the play panels.
- If the player is not currently playing, the next available track is loaded and playback initiated.

A visual indicator of this is displayed just above the History Dialog.



If you have a track playing when automation mode is started, it will continue to play the track ie. it will not interrupt it in any way. If you have any tracks (manually) loaded in the panels, these will be played out first ie. before the next tracks from the automation playlist.

Once automation is underway, *Playout* will continue to load and play tracks unattended, indefinitely if the list is set to loop or until the list has completed.

To leave automation mode, from the *Playlists* menu choose *Stop*. Playback of any (current) track will continue uninterrupted and *Playout* will remain in Auto mode and continue (if left alone) to play the remaining loaded tracks. However you can choose to clear these and continue normal operation.

The Playlist definitions you entered in the *Setup* box are remember such that all that is required to resume automation is to choose the *Start* menu item again.

6.2.3 More about Playlists

Playlists are a key component within *Playout* and there are a whole host of powerful things you can do with them which are beyond the scope of this guide – it's worth reading the online Help within *Playout Express* to get a feel for some of the things it can do for you. This includes:

- Ability to load playlists from third party applications.
- Automatically to intelligently generate playlists based on a set of specified criteria
- Export playlists to third party applications

7 WHERE NEXT?

This guide has attempted to get you up and running and become familiar with the Payout system. This final section touches on some other material which will help you make the most of Payout.

7.1 Online Help

We spent a long time attempting to make the online help for both Payout and Payout Express as friendly as possible and to cover all aspects of what the package can do. These should cover all the aspects of the software we've glossed over here, in particular:

- *Playlists* – how to create them automatically including scheduling in jingles and adverts at appropriate intervals. There is also a separate PDF file called the *PlayListing Guide*, which is on the *Start* menu under OAS Payout. This covers all aspects of how playlist generation works within Payout.
- *Track Listers* – learn how to display information about track “now playing” and a recent history of played tracks on your website and through streaming media servers.

7.2 Developers Guide

For the technically minded, the *Payout Developers guide* contains information on interacting with Payout and the Payout database, including:

- Writing your own Playlist generators
- Auto starting Payout from third party applications, eg. Having your mixing desk start playback automatically on a fader.
- Navigating around the Payout database

7.3 Contact us

Drop an email with any questions or queries to:

<mailto:payout@onasticksoftware.co.uk>

©2005-2021 OnAStickSoftware

MySQL is a trademark of Oracle Corporation

ASIO is a trademark and software of Steinberg Media Technologies GmHH.