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TEN

HINTS & TIPS
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**CHAPTER 10:
HINTS & TIPS**

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This chapter does not take into account different user configurations, so some of the following may not be relevant to a particular setup.

Without a valid project, some functions won't work at all, and others will constantly display a warning message. To prevent this, all possible users should always log in and open a project. However, some users (e.g. engineers) won't need fully set up configurations, so a Temp user and project should be created for these occasional users. That way, if they need to store a setup for future reference, it will be easy to find, rather than being stored in the open project of the current user, which might then be difficult to identify at a later date.

If basic setups are stored as notes in their own project, giving the project a name starting with 111 will ensure that, with the Vault sorting set to alphabetic for projects, that project is always at the top left of the vault window when it is opened, or displayed when changing from another Vault view.

Projects can be used to store non-grading information. For instance, one called 'Help' could have notes with the names and phone numbers of support engineers, or local equipment suppliers. Numbers for clients, restaurants, taxi companies and so forth can be stored this way; they are then quickly available for all operators. Alternatively, a list can be made with information as labels. Put the telecine in 'Slide' mode, type in the information and press "Add", then press in a couple of times, enter the next number or whatever, and press "Add" again. The advantages of making a list instead of notes is that it can be faster to scroll up and down, and several events can be used to enter full addresses, or anything that won't fit in the label in one go; the disadvantage is that it then can't sort the information alphabetically.

A similar use of notes is to put a note with the clients name and contact details in each project (if projects are saved as job names), or put a dummy event at the start of a list with the information as a label.

If operators like different default settings, each one should make a note when all the controls are set to their own preferences. If this note is stored in a setup project, and given a name starting 111, it will be the top left icon in the note view, so quick to open. Then open the Engineering menu, then Defaults Setup and tap on each parameter known to be different. The new defaults are now stored.

Although macros can't read values, they will remember all key presses, so they can be used to read notes. If a note is given a unique name (e.g. 1x1), a macro including "Read" "1X1" will read it, and this note can be used to store values. However, the note must be in the current project for this to work.

If one project is made that contains setups, notes for defaults or special values accessed through macros, as described above, copying the same project for each job and then renaming it will mean that all those notes are already available.

Press "Save" often; then, after recording, rename the list as the transfer version and delete all the unnecessary ones. Computers crash...

The biggest single mistake when using the Pogle is failing to see that it is not in Program mode while playing through lists, so the material is not played back as graded. If the Pogle is in any mode other than 'Program', it will hold onto the grading it had when the current mode ('Trim', 'Copy', 'Read' or 'Bypass') was selected.

If a flash occurs at some point in a dynamic (usually on the first or last frame) there is quite possibly a switch function being turned on or off (e.g., one of the multiple channel controls in Mega 2). Switches are either on or off; they cannot be dynamically programmed for anything else. If there is noise during a dynamic, check that a Mega 2 channel is not opening (or closing) during it. If a dynamic event is made, and then a new Mega 2 channel opened at either end, the Pogle will assume that it needs to open or close it during the dynamic.

To overcome this, there are several options. The new Mega 2 channel can be copied to the other end of the dynamic and then its output controls reset so they are applying no correction; or its region size and position can be changed as the selected object moves. Lastly, the feathering and priority values can be used to make the change less obvious.

The colour correction is done in this order: telecine, Mega 1, Vignette, Mega 2. If an isolation is made on Mega 2, changing any other controls will change the image being fed to Mega 2, so the isolation might need re-adjusting. While this is not always possible, try to avoid reducing the saturation too much on the input to Mega 2, as this will make subsequent isolations more difficult. Similarly, if using MegaGamma, use it in Output rather than Input, unless the source material would really benefit from pre-correction before it gets to Mega 1.

Especially with Spirit (line array) type telecines, it can be much quicker to put a punch frame (or any other, if you can see a monitor) in the gate while standing at the machine, rather than trying to inch backward and forward from the desk; this is because the film has to move forward over the array to make the picture, so a one frame inch reverse takes a couple of seconds to do.

If using a disc cache and a pen a tablet, clicking with the side switch on a thumbnail should send the cache to that frame but not apply the grading from it to the current one.

If working from a telecine source, making a shape or region that requires fine positioning will need the telecine to park the film in the correct vertical position; pressing "Stop" will not guarantee that. Make an edit point, and then play the film a few seconds; "Cue" "In" or "Out" will then park the film with positional accuracy for most machines.

If making a list that may require later resizing or panning, open the User Setup window and select only the colour correction channels (usually SCC, for Pixi colour correction only) from the Default Group Lamps at the bottom of the window. Then, when running the same material with the same list, but doing the resizing, select only Scans instead. For each pass of the list, only that group will be entered as active events.

Some User made windows can be useful for occasional use, but clutter up the screen otherwise; when iconised, they can make finding other icons more fiddly than necessary. Make a separate view containing all the useful but little-used windows; as pressing the "View" key will step through the current users views, if there are only three or four, this is a quick way of accessing the special windows, which can always be left open in that view (Evolution panels do not have a dedicated 'View' key).

A good use of this is to have edit durations ect. in units other than time. Some clients think in terms of feet and frames; so windows with edit points and durations in both feet and frames and frames only can be useful when working with them. Using the "." key on the numeric keypad will convert numbers to feet and frames, so edit and cue points can be entered in these units. Whereas "+ 300" "Cue" will cue the transport forward 3 seconds, "+3-00" (which will be displayed as +3+00) "Cue" will move it forward 3 feet. If the "." key is pressed before the number is entered, the number becomes a frame count. Thus "-.257" (which will appear on the vdu as -+257) "Cue" will cue the transport back 257 frames.

To quickly measure the duration of an event "Up" "In" "Copy" "Out" will enter edit points in the transport window, and will show the duration as well. A macro can be made to do this.

When editing, not selecting the correct transport will mean editing points being entered for the wrong deck; this is a frequent cause of the telecine going into varispeed, as out points are set on the wrong machine, and the Pogle then thinks it has to trim the telecine speed to match. Also, the list can only be used to enter edit or cue points if the telecine (or source deck in 'Tape' mode) is selected as the current transport.

The commonest editing problem is: not changing from Assemble to Insert... Also, entering out points in Assemble when a machine other than the telecine is selected (see above).

How often the backup lists are made can be set in a window called 'List Backup Defaults', which can be opened as normal from the vault panels page.

If having to make an frame accurate edit, always mark the in and out points at least two frames from the correct frames, and make a test edit this way first; don't run the source deck, but make the record machine input something very clearly not the actual material. On old edit systems, most editors would drop black into the space that the edit would make. If the edit is quite long, check each end in turn. It is much better to spend two minutes doing this than getting it wrong and destroying the whole master. Some vtr machines are not frame accurate when previewing, so this is not always the best way of checking edits. Once confident that the record in and out points are correct, any changes to the timing must be done from the source deck, not the recorder. Also, check the recorder is in Insert if necessary (again).

The yellow leds on the front of the Pixi flash in a fixed pattern if it is running correctly; this is a quick way of seeing if the processor has crashed. If there is a crash that stops the panel "Save" key working, and a current list will be lost by a restart, usually the SGI mouse will save the list if its 'Save' button is clicked on. With Evolution panel systems, nervous operators might want to make macros of the "Save" key on each panel as well.

Evolution panel systems may be susceptible to static. Get some anti-static solution and spray the floor around where the colourist sits every two or three days.

If using MegaGamma, put 'megam' or something similar in the list name. Although the original colourist might always remember when they used MegaGamma, it might be that another colourist has to use the same list to do a modified version of it; they might not realise that MegaGamma was applied. If using different MegaGamma settings in the same list, give the MegaGamma file names, and enter the same names as labels in the list. Similarly, if using filters in the telecine, put the filter names in as labels, or in the list name.

If importing files from a cd, the O2 will sometimes not read them if they were made using the 'Write session' option on the cd burner; the disc must be closed for the O2 to read it.

Use the 'Slide' mode to change events without having to actually park on them, as 'Cue' will be instantaneous. WARNING: entering information on events you are not actually looking at can be unpredictable...

For new users, some of the examples in this manual may be confusing at first. To make things clearer, make dummy lists with the telecine in 'Slide' mode, and make events exactly 1 second long (this can be quickly done by typing in codes and pressing "Add"). Also, when changing values, always use easily remembered values.

To make a list without the thumbnails (to reduce its size); open the list, and turn off 'List Images' in the Room Setups window. The put the telecine in slide mode and cue to each event and press "Enter". With a long list, it might be worth making a macro to do this.

