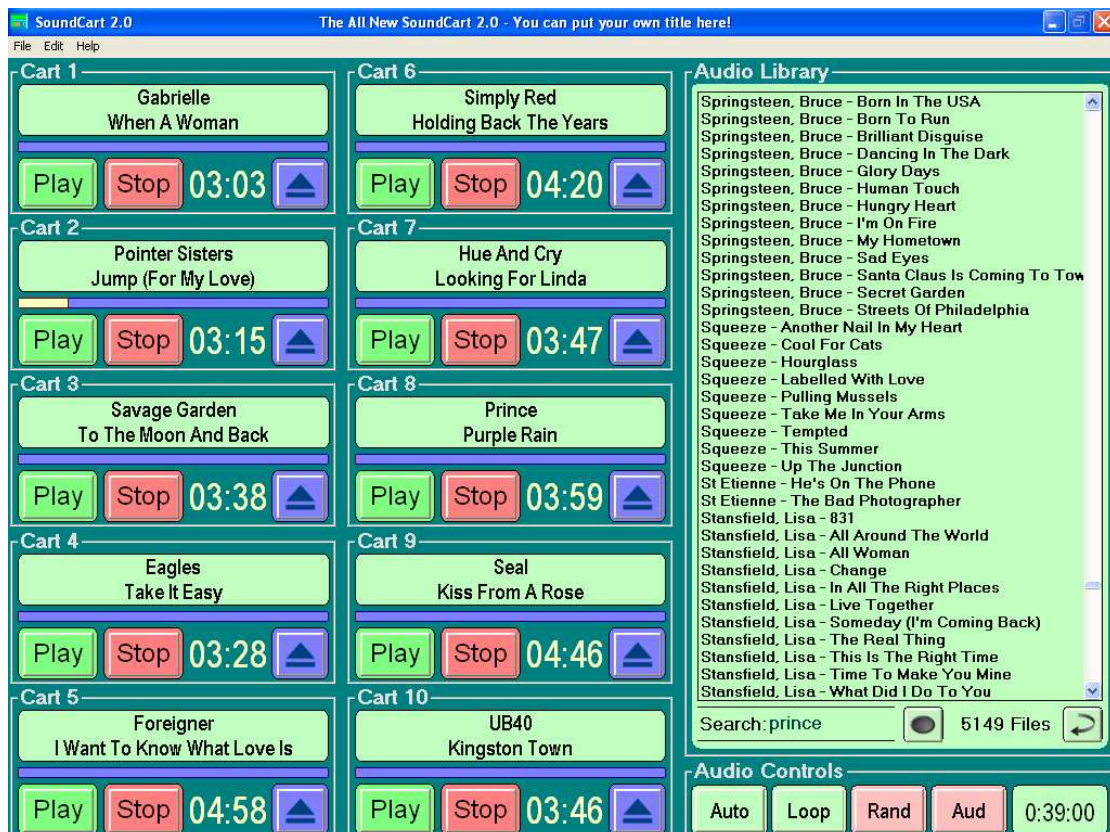


SoundCart 2.0

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User Manual



For illustrative purposes only.

SoundCart 2.0 - User Manual Index

➤ **Welcome**

Page 1

Welcome To SoundCart 2.0

➤ **Getting Started**

Page 2

Recommend Specifications

Page 3

SoundCart 2.0 On A Network

Page 4

Naming Audio Files

➤ **The Audio Library**

Page 5

The Audio Library - Overview

Page 6

Selecting An Audio Folder

Page 7

Navigating The Audio Library

Page 8

Searching The Audio Library

Page 9

Audio Library Refresh

Page 10

Auditioning Audio

Page 11

Audio Counter

Page 12

Print

➤ **Audio Carts**

Page 13

Audio Carts - Overview

Page 14

Loading Audio

Page 15

Playing Audio

Page 16

Pausing Audio

Page 17

Stopping Audio

Page 18

Ejecting Audio

Page 19

Title Display

Page 20

Progress Bar

Page 21

Audio Timer

➤ **Automation**

Page 22

Automation - Overview

Page 23

Auto Mode

Page 24

Loop Mode

Page 25

Random Mode

Page 26

Total Time

Page 27

Fade Time

Page 28

Segue Time - mp3 Audio Files

Page 29

Segue Time - Non mp3 Audio Files

➤ **SoundCart Stacks**

Page 30

SoundCart Stacks

➤ **Tip Of The Day**

Page 31

Tip Of The Day

➤ **Customisable Caption**

Page 32

Customisable Caption

➤ **Frequently Asked Questions**

Page 33

Frequently Asked Questions

Welcome to SoundCart 2.0

Introduction

Welcome to **SoundCart 2.0**, a digital audio playback tool for use in professional broadcast, production and live stage environments.

SoundCart 2.0 is compatible with many popular digital audio formats including .mp2, .mp3, .wav (linear and compressed) .wma, .aif and .snd *. The programme allows the user to play single audio files or create extended mixes and automated sequences using any of the 10 available cart players.

SoundCart 2.0 features easy to read countdown timers, visual progress bars, visual 'audio near end' warnings, a customisable title display, multiple search options and the ability to save and recall audio play-lists (SoundCart Stacks).

SoundCart 2.0 is part of the **Sound Audio Software** product range. You can find out more online: www.soundaudiosoftware.co.uk

* A third-party codec maybe required for the playback of some audio formats.

Recommended Specifications

Overview

SoundCart 2.0 has been designed to operate on computers working under Microsoft Windows XP (Professional and Home) ®. The programme will also run on legacy versions of Windows; such as 2000, 98SE, ME and NT 4.

The PC must meet the following minimum specifications:

500MHz processor

128Mb RAM

Hard Drive with a minimum of 15Mb free (for **SoundCart 2.0** installation)

16 Bit sound card *

VGA card capable of displaying at a resolution of 800x600 or above **

Keyboard and Mouse

* **SoundCart 2.0** will operate with any standard sound card.

** **SoundCart 2.0** has been optimised for a screen resolution of 1024 x 768. More information about the supported screen resolutions can be found at the end of this user manual in the section titled **Frequently Asked Questions**.

Important Note: **SoundCart 2.0** utilises Windows Media Player ®. It is essential that Media Player be installed on your **SoundCart 2.0** computer.

HINT: Windows Media Player can be downloaded from www.microsoft.com.

Recommendations

Ideally all audio files should be stored on a dedicated local hard drive or else a well configured network. It is recommended that you perform regular maintenance using Disk Defragmenter – found under Windows System Tools. This will reduce the possibility of audio having a delayed start or skipping.

For more information, see **Frequently Asked Questions**.

SoundCart 2.0 On A Network

SoundCart 2.0 can be used to access audio files across a network.

It is important though that the network is well configured. A badly set-up network can result in reduced data delivery. This in turn can cause audio to have a delayed start or else skip during playback.

Naming Audio Files

In order for **SoundCart 2.0** to display audio filenames correctly, it is important to understand how the programme processes filename information.

SoundCart 2.0 will read any standard filename and display the result without showing the three-letter file extension (for example .wav or .mp3).

SoundCart 2.0 will also look to see if a filename contains a hyphen.

SoundCart 2.0 uses hyphens to know where to 'split' a filename into two and display the results in the carts Title Display on two lines of text instead of one.

For example, an .mp3 file with the filename ***Artist Name – Song Title.mp3*** will return the following:

Artist Name
Song Title

If no hyphen is found within the audio filename, then the filename will be displayed in the corresponding carts Title Display on one line only.

The Audio Library

Overview

The Audio Library is where you find and select audio files.

The Audio Library displays all valid audio files stored in the selected audio folder (see **Selecting An Audio Folder**).

Audio files are displayed in numerical and alphabetical order. The user can determine this sequence (for example 1-10 / A-Z or 10-1 / Z-A).

For more information refer to **Navigating The Audio Library**.

Selecting An Audio Folder

In order for the Audio Library to be able to display audio files, it is first necessary to tell **SoundCart 2.0** where to look.

Select the pull down **Edit** menu and choose the option **Select Audio Folder**. You will be presented with a list of local drives, directories and network connections on your PC.

Choose the path and folder containing your audio files and click OK.

SoundCart 2.0 will display all valid audio files in your selected Audio Folder.

Navigating The Audio Library

The keyboard Page Up and Page Down keys, the Cursor Up and Cursor Down keys, as well as the Home and End keys can all be used to navigate the Audio Library. In addition, the mouse can also be used.

SoundCart 2.0 allows the user to change the order in which audio files are displayed. By default the Audio Library will display files alphanumerically (1-10 / A-Z). By single left-clicking the Reverse Sort button (figure 1), **SoundCart 2.0** will reverse this order so that files are displayed (10-1 / Z-A).



Figure 1

A further single left-click will revert to the default display (1-10 / A-Z).

Searching The Audio Library

SoundCart 2.0 makes it easy to search for audio files. The programme employs two search methods: Keyword Search and Drilldown Search.

Keyword Search allows the user to search the Audio Library using all or part of an audio file name. The results are displayed in a new list.

Drilldown Search allows the user to find audio files by entering the first few characters of the desired filename. As each character is entered, **SoundCart 2.0** will 'drilldown' the results until the desired file is found.

Both the Keyword Search and Drilldown Search utilise the Search Box located to the bottom left of the Audio Library.

Simply use the mouse to single left-click in the Search Box and use the keyboard to enter your chosen search text. **SoundCart 2.0** will automatically start to drilldown the possible search results. To use Keyword Search, simply click on the Search button located to the right of the search box (figure 2).



Figure 2

Please note that if the Search Box contains text, it will not be possible to use the keyboard Space Bar to start a manual fade until the text is cleared.

Audio Library Refresh

SoundCart 2.0 can search for new audio files in the current Audio Folder.

To activate Audio Library Refresh mode, select the pull down **Edit** menu and choose the heading labelled **Audio Library Refresh**.

If new audio files are found they will be displayed in the Audio Library.

HINT: You may wish to use this mode if **SoundCart 2.0** is being used on a network where other users are regularly adding new audio files.

Auditioning Audio

SoundCart 2.0 makes it easy to audition or play audio direct from the Audio Library without having to first load audio into a cart player.

The Aud (Audition) button is used. The button has three states:

Green – Audition is enabled. **SoundCart 2.0** will play the selected audio file from beginning to end. The Aud button will show a time countdown.

Yellow – Audition is enabled. **SoundCart 2.0** will start to play the chosen audio file X number of seconds from the end of the file. X is determined by the figure entered in the Audition Time input box (figure 3). This feature is accessed by selecting the pull down **Edit** menu and then choosing **Audition**.

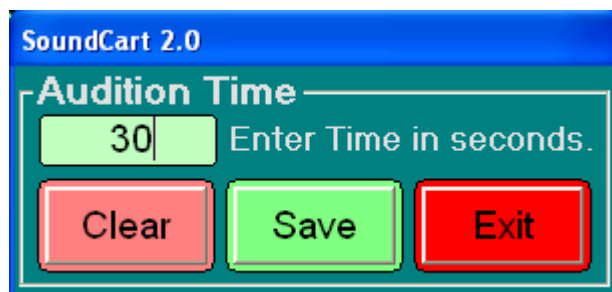


Figure 3

Red – Audition is disabled. **SoundCart 2.0** will not audition audio files.

To audition audio, use the mouse to single left-click on your chosen audio file shown in the Audio Library. To stop play back, simply repeat the process.

Audio Counter

The Audio Counter is located to the bottom right of the Audio Library.

The counter displays the total number of valid audio files shown in the **SoundCart 2.0** Audio Library.

It is possible to hide the Audio Counter. To do so, simply select the pull down **Edit** menu and choose **Hide Audio Counter**.

Repeat the process to reveal the counter.

Print

SoundCart 2.0 allows the user to print a list of files in the Audio Library.

This facility can be accessed using the pull down **File** menu and by selecting **Print**. Alternatively the keyboard shortcut Ctrl-P can be used.

SoundCart 2.0 will print to your default printer.

Note: **SoundCart 2.0** will print approximately 60 titles per page.

Audio Carts

Overview

SoundCart 2.0 features 10 independent cart players, each of which can play a single audio file or be used to help create extended automated sequences.

All 10 cart players feature the same common controls:

Play, Stop and **Eject** (figure 4).



Figure 4

The cart players also share common visual displays:

Audio Filename, Countdown Timer, Progress Bar and **'5 second' Audio End Warning**.

The cart players are named 1 to 10 and will play sequentially.

Loading Audio

The mouse and keyboard can be used to load audio in **SoundCart 2.0**.

Firstly, find your required audio file in the Audio Library (see **Navigating The Audio Library** and **Searching The Audio Library**).

Using The Mouse 1: Double left-click on the chosen audio file. Your selected audio file will be loaded into **the first available cart player**. *

Using The Mouse 2: Single left-click on the chosen audio file and then keeping the mouse button down 'drag' your selected audio file onto a cart player and then 'drop' (release the mouse button). If an audio file is already loaded in your selected cart, then the existing audio will be replaced.

Using The Keyboard: Press the **Enter (Return)** key on your keyboard. Your chosen audio file will be loaded into **the first available cart player**. *

* **HINT:** If audio is already loaded into **all** 10 cart players, you will not be able to load a new audio file until you 'eject' at least one audio file from a cart.

Playing Audio

Once audio is loaded into a cart, there are two ways to play an audio file.

Using The Mouse: Single left-click the play button on the corresponding cart.

Using The Keyboard: Use the corresponding keyboard function key (F1 to F10). **HINT:** The function keys are normally located at the top of the keyboard.

The audio file will now play.

Pausing Audio

Once an audio file is loaded into a cart and the file is playing, it is possible to pause playback.

Using The Mouse: Single left-click the play button on the corresponding cart.

Using The Keyboard 1: Use the corresponding keyboard function key (F1 to F10). **HINT:** The function keys are often located at the top of the keyboard.

Using The Keyboard 2: Use the F11 function key. **HINT:** The F11 function key will pause **all** carts currently playing.

Audio playback will now pause and the carts Play button will show 'Paused'.

Note: In order to resume playback, simply repeat the above step. The corresponding carts Play button will then show 'Play'.

Stopping Audio

There are two ways to stop an audio file playing.

Using The Mouse: Single left-click the stop button on the corresponding cart.

Using The Keyboard: Use the F12 function key. **HINT:** The F12 function key will stop **all** carts playing.

The audio file(s) will now stop.

Ejecting Audio

There are three ways to eject an audio file.

Using The Mouse: You can use the mouse to single left-click the eject button on the selected cart player.

Using The Keyboard 1: You can use the pull down **Edit** menu and choose the option headed **New**. *

Using The Keyboard 2: Use the standard Windows Ctrl+N shortcut. *

SoundCart 2.0 will prompt the user to save the current SoundCart Stack.

The corresponding cart players Title Display, Progress Bar and Audio Timer will all revert to their default state.

* These methods will eject audio files from **all** carts and return cart displays to their default state.

Title Display

Each of the 10 cart players features a Title Display, which shows the filename of the audio file loaded in the corresponding cart player.

If an audio file is not loaded, the display shows 'Empty Cart'.

HINT: For information about how **SoundCart 2.0** uses hyphens to process filename data refer to the section of this manual titled **Naming Audio Files**.

Progress Bar

Each of the 10 cart players features a Progress Bar, which provides the user with a visual indication of the remaining playing time of an audio file.

If an audio file is playing, the Progress Bar of the corresponding cart will become progressively red.

If an audio file is not playing, the Progress Bar will be blue.

Audio Timer

Each of the 10 cart players feature an Audio Timer, which displays the duration of the audio file loaded into the corresponding cart.

The Audio Timer displays Minutes and Seconds.

If an audio file is loaded but not playing, the Audio Timer displays the **total** duration of the audio file.

If an audio file is loaded and is playing, the Audio Timer displays the **remaining** duration of the audio file.

If no audio file is loaded, the Audio Timer display is blank.

Automation

Overview

SoundCart 2.0 can be used in either manual or automate play modes.

In Auto off mode, **SoundCart 2.0** will play an audio file when the user selects play.

In Auto on mode, once play has been selected, **SoundCart 2.0** will continue to play all carts sequentially.

An extension of the Auto on mode is Loop on (see help section headed **Loop Mode**).

In Loop on mode, **SoundCart 2.0** will play all audio files sequentially and then continually repeat the process until the user intervenes.

A further extension of the Auto on mode is Random on (see help section headed **Random Mode**).

In Random on mode, **SoundCart 2.0** will continually play a selection of audio files chosen at random from the Audio Library.

HINT: In Auto on and Loop on modes, **SoundCart 2.0** will ignore empty carts.

Auto Mode

There are three methods used to activate Auto off and Auto on modes.

Method 1: Use the mouse to single left-click on the Auto button located near the bottom right of the **SoundCart 2.0** screen. Pressing the button once will switch Auto mode to on. The Auto button will turn green. Pressing the button a second time will switch Auto mode to off. The Auto button will turn red.

Method 2: Select the pull down **Edit** menu and choose the option headed **Auto**. This will place a tick next to the Auto heading and switch Auto mode on. Repeating this process will remove the tick and will switch Auto mode off.

Method 3: Use the keyboard shortcut keys Ctrl+A to switch between modes.

Loop Mode

There are three methods used to activate Loop off and Loop on modes.

Method 1: Use the mouse to single left-click on the Loop button located near the bottom right of the **SoundCart 2.0** screen. Pressing the button once will switch Loop mode to on. The Loop button will turn green. Pressing the button a second time will switch Loop mode to off. The Loop button will turn red.

Method 2: Select the pull down **Edit** menu and choose the **Loop** option. This will place a tick next to the Loop heading and will switch Loop mode on. Repeating this process will remove the tick and will switch Loop mode off.

Method 3: Use the keyboard shortcut keys Ctrl+L to switch between Loop on and Loop off modes.

Random Mode

In Random on mode, **SoundCart 2.0** will randomly load 10 audio files chosen from the Audio Library. Once the user selects play on any of the 10 available carts, **SoundCart 2.0** will play each cart in sequence. As each audio file finishes, it will be replaced with another audio file chosen at random. Selecting Random mode will automatically select Auto on and Loop on modes.

Method 1: Use the mouse to single left-click on the Random button located near the bottom right of the screen. Pressing the button once will switch Random mode on. The Random button will turn green. Pressing the button a second time will switch Random mode off. The Random button will turn red.

Method 2: Select the pull down **Edit** menu and choose the **Random** option. This will place a tick next to the Random heading and switch Random mode on. Repeating this will remove the tick and will switch Random mode off.

Method 3: Use the keyboard shortcut keys Ctrl+R to switch between Random on and Random off modes.

HINT: Random mode can be used to create extended automated sequences, making it ideal for broadcast sustaining services or as a non-stop jukebox. Random mode will operate indefinitely, only ending on user intervention.

Total Time

The Total Time can be found on the bottom right of the **SoundCart 2.0** screen.

The Total Time displays the combined duration of all audio files currently loaded into the cart players.

Fade Time

It is possible to fade audio files using **SoundCart 2.0**.

Select the pull down **Edit** menu and choose the **Fade Time** option (figure 5).

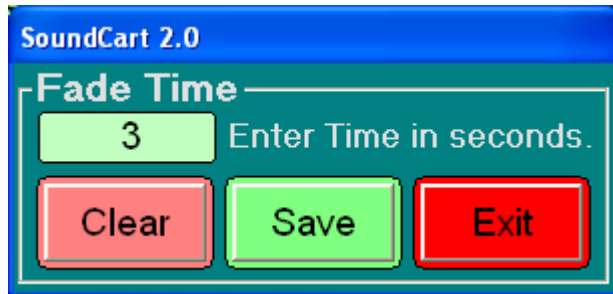


Figure 5

You will be presented with a new window in which you can type a Fade Time. Enter your chosen time in seconds. Select Save.

Important Note: **SoundCart 2.0** will only fade an audio file if the Library Search Box does not contain text. To clear the Search Box of all text simply use the mouse to single left-click on the Audio Library Search Box.

SoundCart 2.0 will create audio fades in different ways dependent on which audio modes are in use:

Auto off mode: The keyboard Space bar is used to start an audio fade. The currently playing audio file(s) will progressively fade and then stop.

Auto on mode: **SoundCart 2.0** will fade the audio file when the remaining audio time matches the user default segue time. At this point, **SoundCart 2.0** will also play the next available cart.

Loop on and Random on modes: **SoundCart 2.0** will fade the current audio file when the audio remaining time matches the user default segue time. **SoundCart 2.0** will also play the next available cart. If the last available cart is currently playing, the programme will then mix into the first available cart.

HINTS: The Fade Time affects all of the 10 available carts. If no 'fade' is required the default Fade Time should be set to 0 (zero). By using Fade Time in association with Segue Time it is possible to create advanced audio mixes (ensure that the Segue time is of a longer duration than the Fade time).

In Auto on and Loop on modes, the keyboard space bar and function keys (F1 to F10) can be used to play the next available cart and fade the current cart.

If an audio file is already fading, **SoundCart 2.0** will not allow the user to manually start a second fade. The existing audio must first complete its fade.

Segue Time – mp3 Audio Files

With mp3 files, you can use a segue time to create expert audio mixes when **SoundCart 2.0** is used in Auto on, Loop on or Random on modes.

To do so, select the pull down **Edit** menu, choose the option headed **Segue Time** and then select the option headed **mp3**.

You will be presented with a new window in which will be displayed a list of valid mp3 files corresponding to files in the Audio Library.

To set a segue point; first use the mouse to single left-click on your chosen audio file.

You can then opt to audition the complete audio file, or the final 30, 15 or 5 seconds.

To hear your chosen audio file, click **Play**. At the point where you wish to set the segue, simply click **Set**. **SoundCart 2.0** will now record the segue point.

Next time the chosen audio file is played using **SoundCart 2.0** in either Auto on, Loop on or Random on mode, the programme will automatically mix into the next audio file at the segue point.

HINT: To remove an audio files segue point, simply click **Clear**.

IMPORTANT: **SoundCart 2.0** adheres to the mp3 TAG v1.1 standard. Segue point data is stored in the 'comments' field of the mp3 TAG. Any existing data stored in the comments field will be overwritten. Other fields will remain intact.

Segue Time – Non mp3 Audio Files

It is possible to create audio mixes using **SoundCart 2.0** in Auto on, Loop on or Random on modes.

To do so, select the pull down **Edit** menu, choose the option headed **Segue Time** and select the option headed **Non mp3** (figure 6).

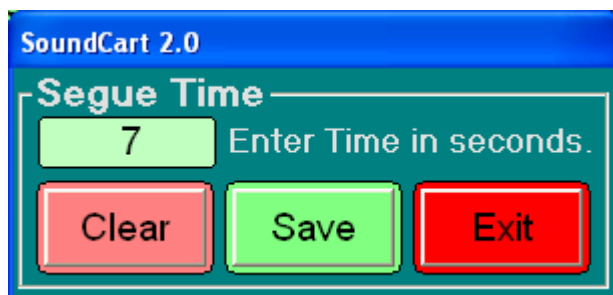


Figure 6

You will be presented with a new window in which you can type a Segue Time. Enter your chosen time in seconds. Select Save.

Next time **SoundCart 2.0** is used in either Auto on, Loop on or Random on mode, the programme will play each consecutive audio file X number of seconds prior to the end of the current audio file.

HINT: The Segue Time affects all of the 10 available carts. If no 'sound mix' is required the default Segue Time should be set to 0 (zero).

SoundCart Stacks

SoundCart 2.0 can save favourite audio selections (SoundCart Stacks) for later recall.

To **save** a SoundCart Stack, select the pull down **File** menu and choose **Save** or **Save As**.

You will be presented with a standard Windows dialog box. Choose a name for your SoundCart Stack and select where you want to save the resulting file.

Select Save.

To **open** a SoundCart Stack, select the pull down **File** menu and choose **Open**. Find the location of your previously saved SoundCart Stack.

Double left-click on your chosen file.

Tip Of The Day

SoundCart 2.0 can display tips and suggestions to help improve the way you use the programme.

On first use, **SoundCart 2.0** will automatically display the Tip Of The Day box.

You can scroll through the tips list at random by clicking on the Next Tip button. Pressing the OK button will close the Tip Of The Day box.

SoundCart 2.0 can display the Tip Of The Day box each time the programme is launched. To do so, ensure the Show Tips At Startup box is ticked.

Customisable Caption

It is possible to customise your **SoundCart 2.0** installation by including a name in the title bar at the top of the **SoundCart 2.0** screen.

Select the pull down **Edit** menu and choose the **Caption** option (figure 7).



Figure 7

You will be presented with a new window in which you can type a name (for example an organisation or radio station name). Select Save.

The name will now appear in the centre of the **SoundCart 2.0** title bar.

HINT: **SoundCart 2.0** will save your chosen name and will recall the setting each time the programme is launched.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why can't I hear audio or why is audio very quiet / distorted?

Please check the obvious before fearing the worst! Is the Windows Volume Control set correctly? Is a soundcard (and its drivers) correctly installed on the PC? Is the soundcard connected to an external amplifier or speakers? Is a wire unplugged or damaged? Is the original audio recording at fault?

Why do some audio files appear to have a delayed start?

Check that the audio on the original recording starts immediately – you can edit the file using your favourite audio editor. Ensure that other programmes on your PC are not running and therefore using valuable system resources. Perform regular maintenance on your PC's hard drives using the Windows System Tools. Ensure that any network connection is operating correctly.

Can I play audio files of different formats at the same time?

Yes, **SoundCart 2.0** supports the multiple play back of different formats, so long as the required audio codec (software or hardware) is installed.

Will SoundCart 2.0 play copyright protected audio files?

The phrase 'copyright protected' often means different things to different people! **SoundCart 2.0** will play user recorded audio files that were saved with the copyright protection option activated. However **SoundCart 2.0** will not play audio files encoded with Windows Media Rights Management as well as some other propriety methods of ensuring copyright protection.

Can I run other programmes at the same time as using SoundCart 2.0?

SoundCart 2.0 can run alongside other PC programmes. However this is not recommended in a mission critical environment, such as a live broadcast.

Can I display more than one audio folder at a time?

It is not possible to display more than one audio folder at a time. It is recommended that all audio is stored in a single folder.

Why can I sometimes hear the Windows 'exclamation' system sounds?

By default Windows alerts the user to certain system events by playing a warning sound. To prevent this, open the Windows Control Panel, look for the heading 'Sounds and Audio Devices' and select 'No Sounds' under 'Sound Scheme' properties. Refer to the Windows help file for further information.

Why won't SoundCart 2.0 allow me to manually start an audio fade?

Firstly, if you are using the keyboard Space Bar to start a fade, ensure that the Library Search Box does not contain text. If the Search Box contains text, single left-click on the Search Box to clear all text. Secondly, **SoundCart 2.0** has been designed to create one audio mix at any one time. If an audio file is fading, **SoundCart 2.0** will not allow the user to activate a second fade.

Why do some audio filenames not appear correctly on-screen?

Firstly, **SoundCart 2.0** will only display filenames with a valid file extension – these are of the type .mp2, .mp3, .wav (linear and compressed) .wma, .aif and .snd. Secondly, **SoundCart 2.0** will only display the actual filename and not the file extension. Thirdly, if the filename contains a hyphen, **SoundCart 2.0** will (at the point of the hyphen) 'split' the filename in two and display the results in the corresponding Title Display on two lines of text instead of one. If the filename does not contain a hyphen, the filename will appear on one line.

Why do different screen resolutions alter how SoundCart 2.0 looks?

SoundCart 2.0 will display full screen at all supported standard screen resolutions from 800 x 600 to 1600 x 1200. **SoundCart 2.0** automatically selects the optimum settings, such as font size, for each resolution. Therefore small discrepancies may occur when changing resolution. **HINT: SoundCart 2.0** has been optimised to work at a screen resolution of 1024 x 768.

When I save or open a SoundCart Stack, I can only see a few files in my chosen folder, but I know there are lots more! Why is this?

When Saving or Opening SoundCart Stacks, **SoundCart 2.0** will only display files with the .scs extension (SoundCart Stack files).

I would like to comment about SoundCart 2.0 or find out about other similar products. How can I contact Sound Audio Software?

We welcome feedback! If you would like to comment on this programme or suggest features that you would like to see included in future releases of this or other products, please email support@soundaudiosoftware.co.uk .

You can find out more online: www.soundaudiosoftware.co.uk .