Getting started with SNAPS
[Generic – based on Mac version]

1. What SNAPS can do for you

SNAPS software is designed specifically with journalists in mind - but makes capturing, editing and delivering audiovisual stories easy for any user.

With SNAPS, correspondents in the field can travel light and use the internet to get their reports back to their newsrooms, with minimum fuss. They can use a small (discreet) video camera and store SNAPS on a memory stick so that they don't have to carry their own laptop or other edit gear. And that can be especially valuable in conflict zones where reporters don't want to attract adverse attention.

With SNAPS you can:
- Import video and/or audio from a variety of sources, be it mobile phone footage, high-end camera or directly recorded
- Achieve unified quality across an edit, even where the source materials vary greatly
- Easily edit a report with fully zoomable detail and control
- Mix a range of clips from various sources and apply transitions and wipes
- Easily add and edit audio tracks
- Add subtitles
- Add transcripts
- Use chroma key
- Export stories in a range of formats/codecs
- Send using internet streaming
- Create DVDs, with navigable chapters
- Create low resolution/slideshow versions for emailing, to market your story
- Extract and send high quality stills
- Broadcast live via the internet, using a webcam or plugged-in camera/microphone (operable directly via SNAPS)
- Take part in a live two-way (send and receive via SNAPS and internet)

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2. Installing SNAPS on your Mac

2.1 Installation process

Follow standard installation processes for your Mac operating system.

2.2 Keeping and using the application file on a flash drive/memory stick

You can run SNAPS off a flash drive/memory stick, but each time you plug it into your Mac, it will create folders Documents/SNAPS

2.3 Uninstalling process

Follow the standard uninstallation process for your system. You should find an "uninstall" module within your version of SNAPS.

3. Introducing the start-up interface

3.1 Opening the application

When SNAPS opens on your computer, the interface screen will appear as below *(fig.1).* On first use, the listings of clips and stories will of course be empty.
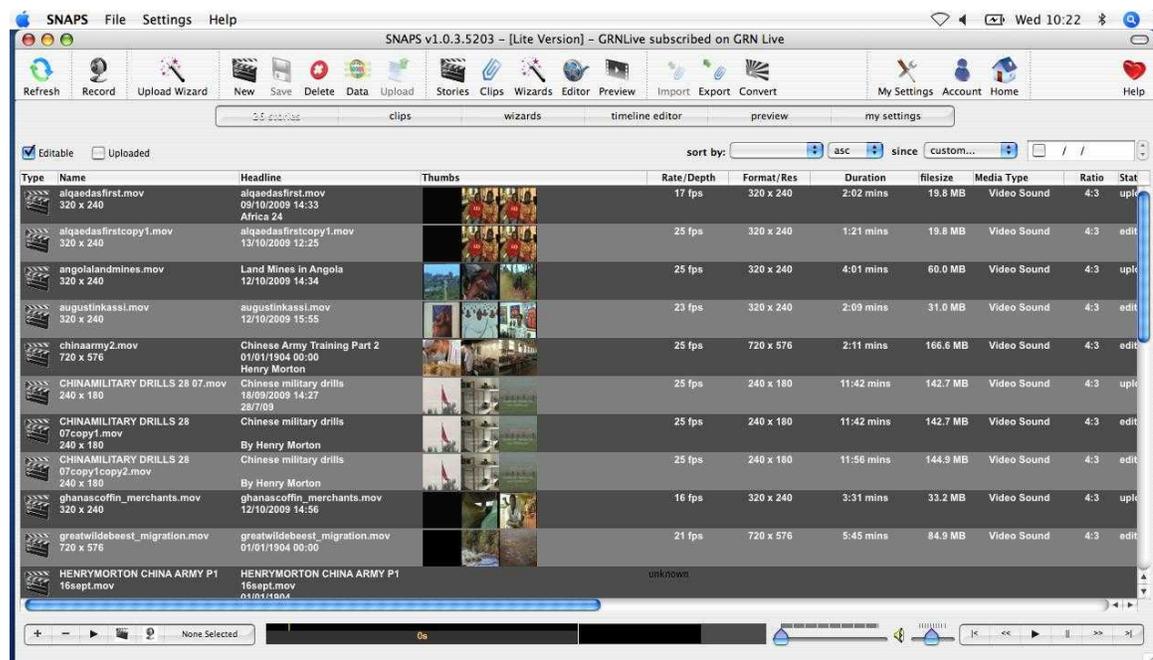
Fig. 1: SNAPS opening screen

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3.2 About the menu bar

Across the top of the screen is the **menu bar** *(fig.2)*.

Fig. 2: *menu bar*

This gives you direct access to key functions, such as recording, editing, importing and exporting, for example, and helpful wizards. You can access

your GRN/GRNLive account ("**Account**")

and you can also adjust system settings

("**Settings**")

regarding your SNAPS user account (for uploading to GRN/GRNLive), channel and audio capture settings and you can set preferences. The **Settings** dialog box also lets you check which formats are available to you on your system for exporting your stories.

Fig. 3: Settings dialog box

3.3 Library screen

The main part of the interface is the screen that will hold two libraries: one for your imported material and the other for your edited stories. This screen will

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be blank when you first start using SNAPS, but as you start importing content and making edits, your libraries will be populated and the screen will show you related thumbnails, giving you quick access to the files.

To start with, import material into your **clips library** and then use these to build up stories. Completed stories need to be stored in your **stories library**, ready for upload.

You can switch between the **clips library** and the **stories library** by using the buttons in the submenu bar placed above the listings .

Fig. 4: submenu

You can adjust the way the information is listed by using the "**sort**" function and you can search for material by date.

Fig. 5: sort function

Each library provides at-a-glance summarised information for each file.

This includes the type of material (video, audio, still image or text), filename or headline plus resolution size, details of import or edit date, and thumbnails. You can also see immediately the frame-per-second rate, the duration and the file size.

 Clicking anywhere along the file line in a library will open up the chosen clip or story ready for viewing or editing.

3.5 Shortcuts bar and controls
At the bottom of the interface is a small **shortcuts bar**.

Fig.6: shortcuts bar

This gives you the following quick shortcuts:

+ add (create) a new clip or story (depends which library you are viewing).
  Use this function to start to create a piece, adding clips as required.
- delete selected clip or story

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> play selected item (click again – or click on viewing window - to pause or stop)

[icon] edit selected clip or story

[icon] record video and/or audio

Also at the bottom of the interface, on the right-hand side, is a volume control slider and control buttons for play, stop/pause, skip forward or back, go to end or go back to start.

4. Importing clips
There are several ways to import clips into your **clips library**:

4.1 Using FILE options
You can import a file by choosing FILE/Import

4.2 Using shortcuts
Or you can use a keyboard shortcut – Apple+Shift+I – to access the import box – or click on the **+** button on the **shortcuts bar**.

4.3 Using Import on menu bar
When in clip library view, you can also access the **Import** icon on the **menu bar** to bring fresh material into the **clips library**.
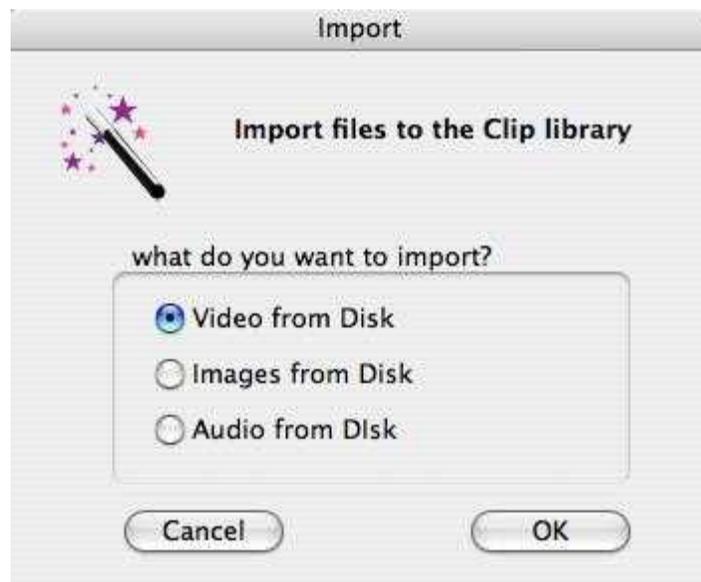

Fig. 7: Import clips dialog box

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Choosing **OK** will bring up a dialog box allowing you to browse your hard-drive, or a plugged-in storage drive, or CD, etc to locate the file you require *(fig.8)*.
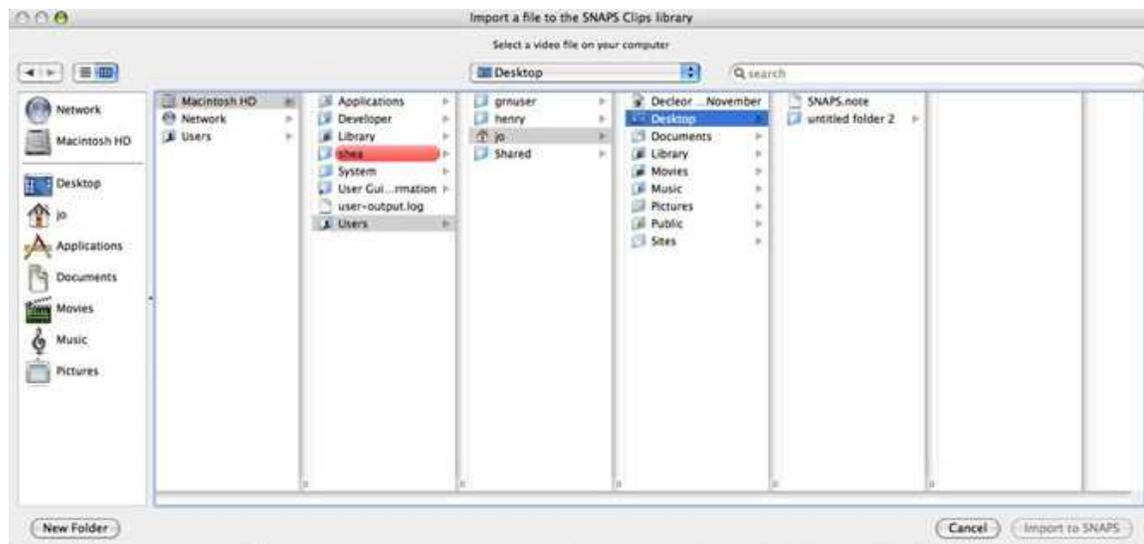

Fig.8: Browsing for a file to import

When you have found the item you want, choose the "*import to SNAPS*" button at bottom-right of the box.

4.4 Using "New" on the menu bar
When in the **clips library**, if you click the **New** icon you will open a "*Create a New Clip*" box which offers three options including "*Import a File from Disk*".
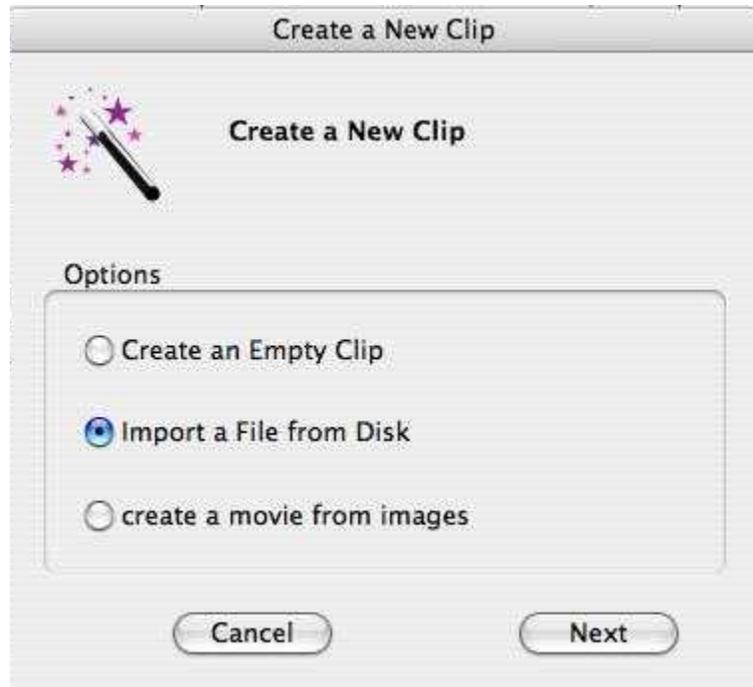
Fig. 9: Create New Clip dialog box

Choose **Next** and you will be guided through the process for the option you have selected.

A slightly different option is offered when you are in the **story library**, when clicking on **New** will bring up the dialog box shown in *Fig. 10*.

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Fig. 10: Create a New Story dialog box

If you choose to create an "empty story", **Next** will take you to a further dialog box where you can provide data relevant to the item. This includes the ability to edit script information, meta tags and file types.

4.5 Importing directly from video or stills held on a camera – if your camera can be plugged into your computer, becoming a de facto storage drive, you can use any of the above ways to navigate to the clips you want to import into SNAPS

5. Recording clips
You can set up recording by:

5.1 Using "Record" on the menu bar – This brings up a box asking whether you want to record video and audio or audio only.

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Fig. 11

Choose your option and click "**Next**" which will then bring up the recording ("Capture") box which will allow you to select the settings that you want and to view your recording in process on a monitoring window. It gives you tab access to providing text or logo on your video and a wide range of options.
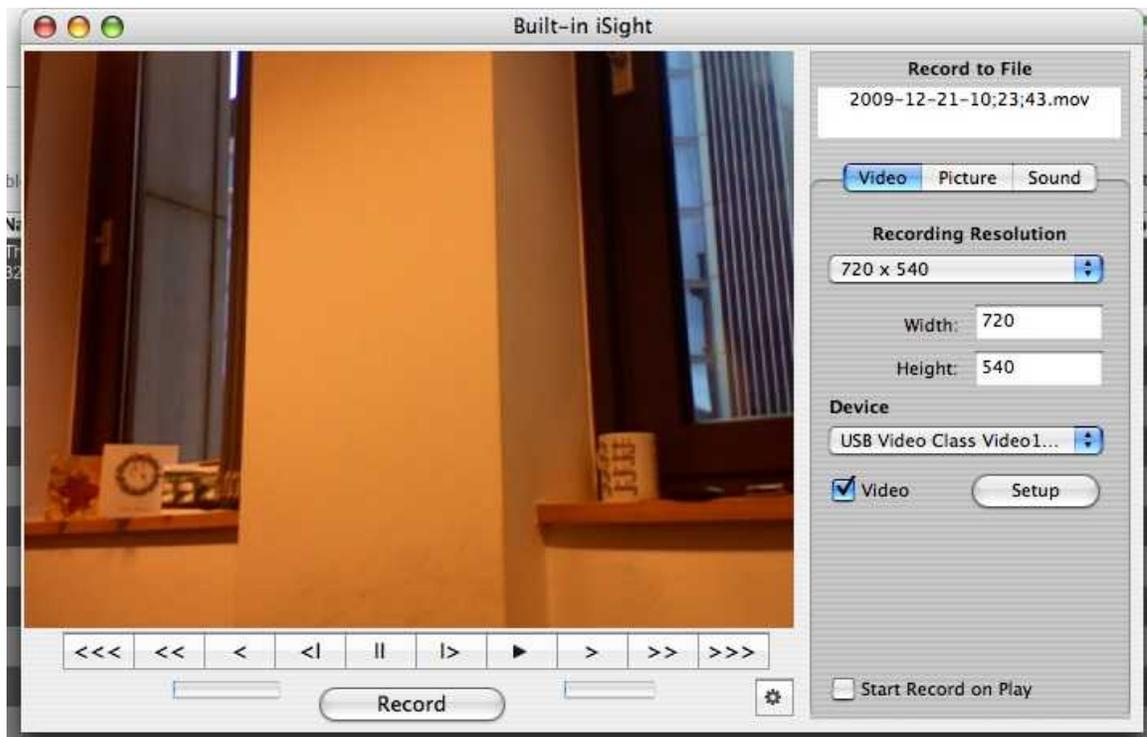

Fig.12: SNAPS Capture options dialog

Depending on your computer setup, you can record using a webcam or a plugged-in camera. SNAPS provides a facility to allow you to control the camera from the keyboard (if your camera has a suitable specification).

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When recording is complete, SNAPS produces an AVI file which goes straight into your **clips library**.

5.2 Using the controls bar
Start by clicking

 on the **shortcuts bar**, then follow the same steps as **5.1** above.

Audio only recordings:

When you choose to record audio only, you will see the **Sound Recorder** box which will let you input title information, adjust settings and control the recording process.
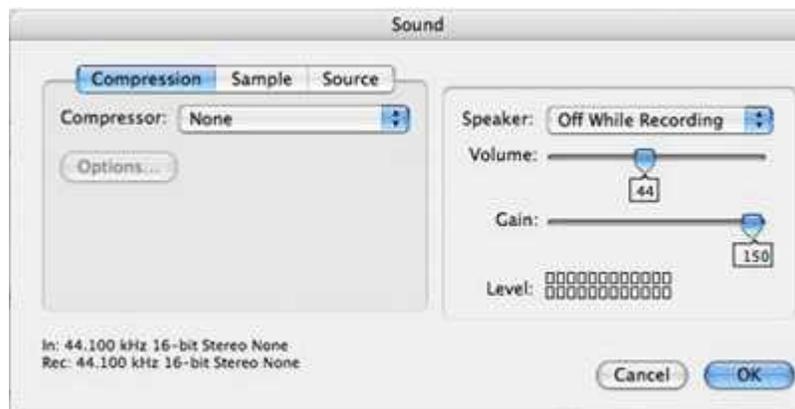

Fig.13a: Sound Recorder box

Fig. 13b: Sound Recorder settings

When you have completed your recording, the clip will appear in the clips library listing, ready for you to export or edit.

6. Wizards

SNAPS provides a range of wizards to help you through many of the processes. That includes importing clips, recording, and editing. You can access them by selecting **Wizards** on the **menu bar** and choosing the type you need from the dialog box.

Fig. 14

7. Using the Upload Wizard

This facility makes it easy for you to upload a story directly to GRNLive.net

Choose the **Upload Wizard** on the **menu bar**. This will bring up the import box where you can use *Browse* to select the required file on your computer - or from an external storage drive or memory stick - and import it straight into GRNLive with all the essential fields pre-filled. The wizard will also take care of format conversion required.

Fig.15: Upload Wizard dialog box, for importing a file directly into GRNLive

8. Editing stories – an overview

When you are ready to work on your clips, select the required file in your library. You can open the Timeline editor by clicking:

- **Editor** on the **menu bar,** or
- **Timeline** on the submenu, or
- the *edit icon* on the **shortcuts bar**

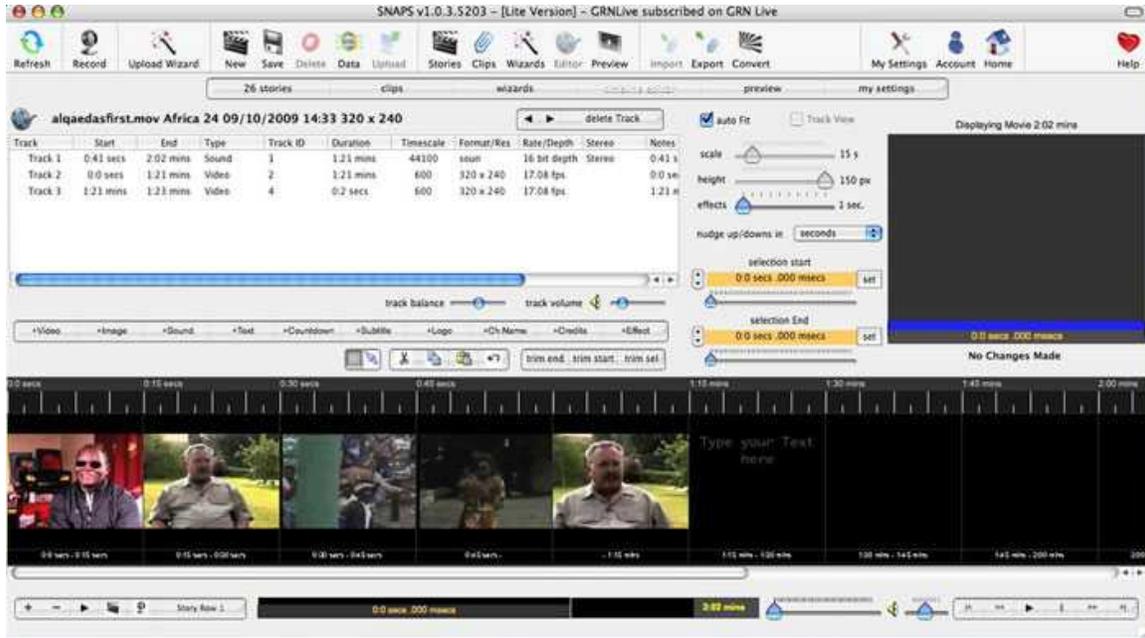Any of the above will open up a new screen:

Fig.16: SNAPS Timeline

There is a monitoring screen and a line of frames (the **Timeline**). The **auto Fit** box is selected by default, but if you deselect this you can alter the **scale** of the **Timeline**. You can also choose whether nudges will be handled in seconds or frames.

Fig.17

The editing functions in SNAPS are similar to those found in most video/audio editing software packages. The Timeline cursor provides an editing reference and there are the usual copy, cut and paste functions.

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Note that there is a panel with track information, sliders for track balance and volume, and a submenu bar with buttons for adding video, images, sound, text, countdown, etc. There is also quick access to trim functions.
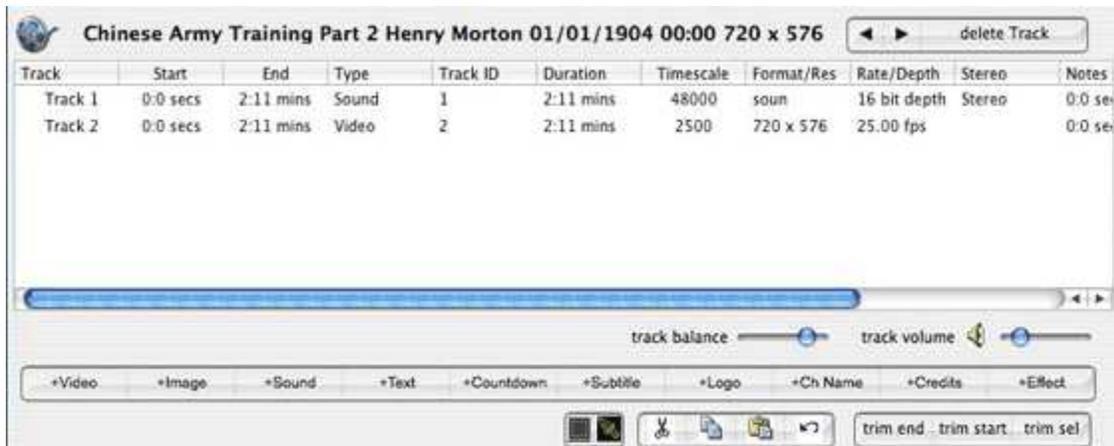

Fig.18: Tracks panel and editing function buttons

To add an effect, for example, select the frames where you want the effect to apply, then click on the **+Effect** button. It brings up an options box as shown in *fig.19*.
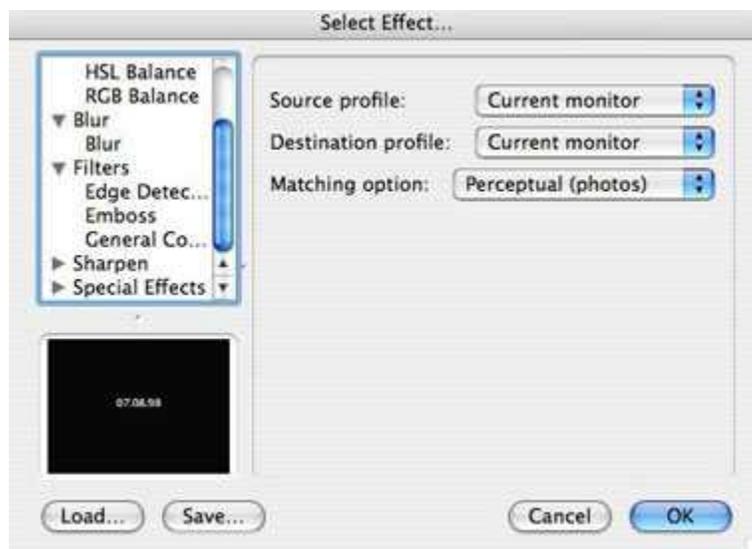

Fig.19: Select Effect dialog box

You can choose from a wide range of effects and will then have options to control the intensity or other parameters affecting the effect you have selected.

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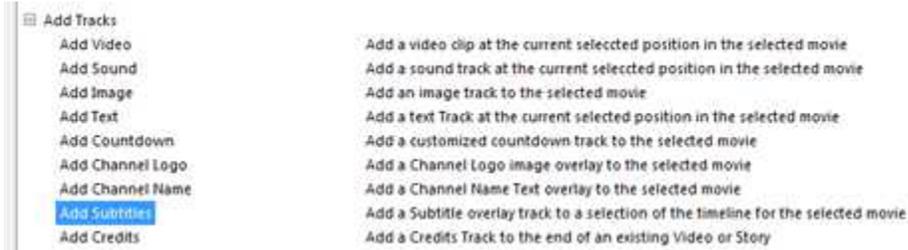Wizards also offer editing and add-track options.

Fig.20

For instance you can use the **Add Subtitles Wizard** to overlay subtitles on your chosen selection of frames, by typing into the dialog's text box, and can determine the text size, font and color. Other options include adding a text tract, or a sound track.
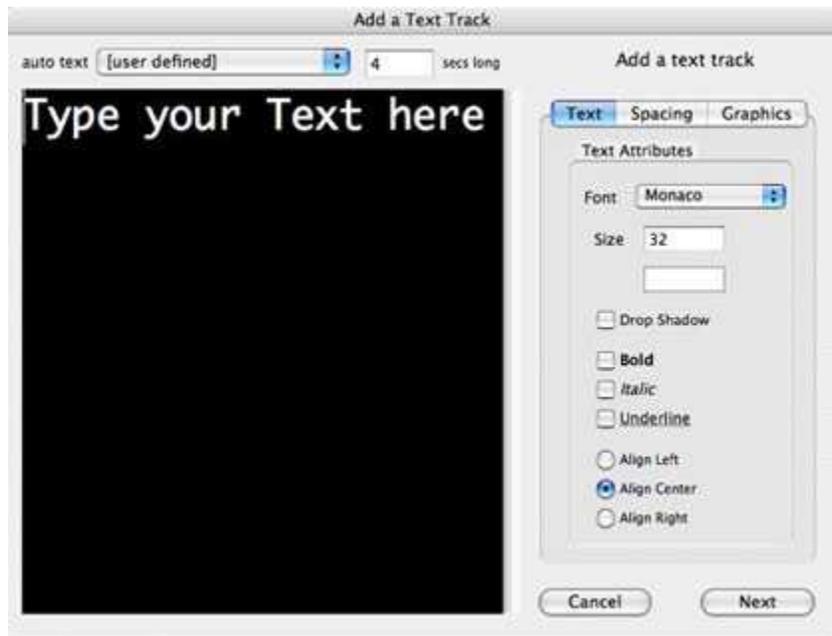

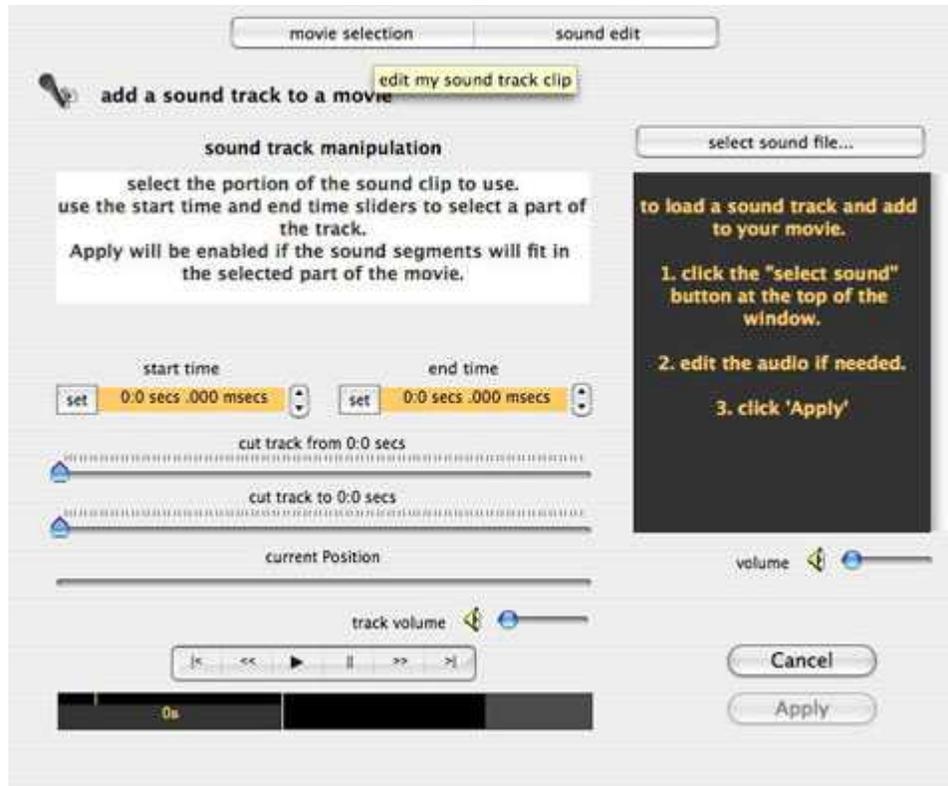*Fig.21: Add a Text Track Wizard dialog box*

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Fig.22: Add a Sound Track Wizard dialog box

9. Preview

When you have completed editing your story, you can take a look at how it turned out, by clicking on the **Preview** icon on the **menu bar**. This opens up a new window where your story will automatically run.

You can use the play/pause/stop etc controls at the bottom of the window.

Fig. 23: Preview window

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Click **Save** to preserve your edits.

9. Exporting

When you are happy with your story, have saved it and are ready to export it, choose the **Export** icon on the **menu bar**. Or you can use a relevant Wizard.

```
⊟ Export
    Export>Video          Export a movie to range of video formats
    Export>Sound          Export the sound track from a movie to range of audio formats
    Export>Images         Export a video as images
    Import>Export         Import - Describe - Export Wizard
⊞ Upload
```

Fig. 23

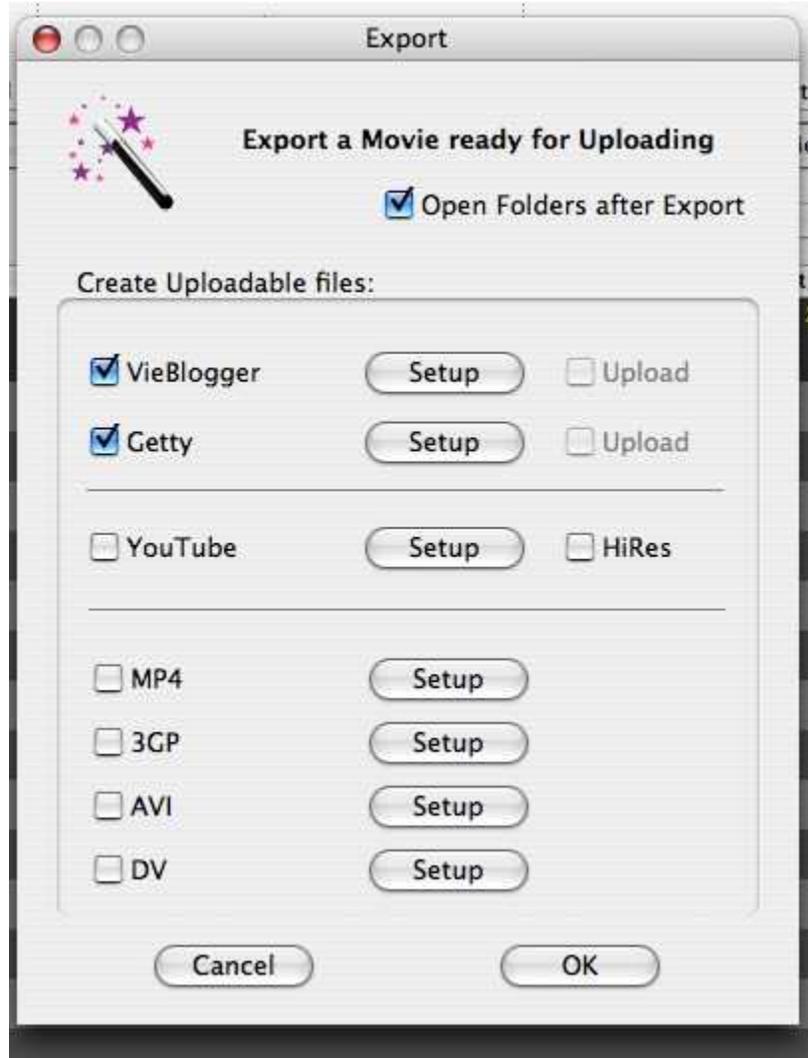Choosing to export a movie to a range of video formats brings up a dialog box of options:

Fig. 24

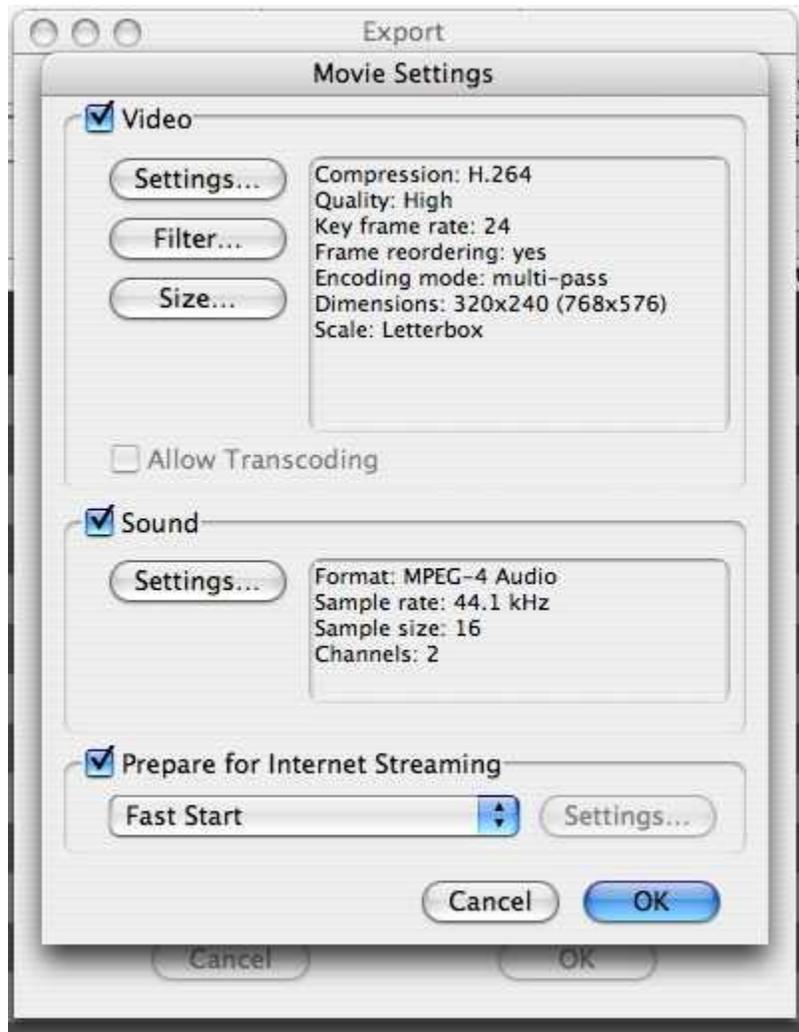Click the **Setup** button for your chosen output to reach the next options dialog box.

Fig. 25: Export Movie settings

Here you are presented with many options, with access to advanced dialogs. You can also prepare for internet streaming for your item.

10. Grabs

SNAPS allows you to easily create a series of screengrabs or thumbnails from your video footage.

Select the item containing the frames you want to turn into stills, then choose FILE/ Movie stills/Grabs.

This brings up a dialog box where you can fine-tune your requirements and click on **Run** to initiate the process.

Fig. 26: Video Grabs and Thumbnails dialog

The resulting grabs are placed in a dedicated folder: …Documents/SNAPS/grabs

SNAPS creates an individual folder within this for each story and the grab files will be located there, numbers 1 to x (*x=no. of grabs*). Use right-click and select *Edit grabs* to see them – and to generate more when in story or clip list.

11. Exiting SNAPS

To exit the application, go to SNAPS/Quit SNAPS or use keyboard Apple-Q

12. Getting help
If you have general queries about SNAPS, contact us by e-mailing info at snaps dot net