



e-CourtReporter, LLC
and e-Power Video Tutorials present:



e-Tips Newsletter

In this Issue

Keith Vincent - p. 1

**Bridge:
Customized Demo**

Wil Wilcox - p. 2

**Creative Notebook
Sound Cards**

Keith Vincent - p. 3

**Video Tutorial Updated:
"Interactive Realtime
Transcription," 3rd Ed.**



Please keep in mind that because of the volume of e-mail we receive and the fact that that we are volunteering our time for this free newsletter, we can't routinely answer individual questions by phone or e-mail, nor can we consult on problems or purchasing decisions.

**Advantage Software
Tech Support
24/7/365
1-800-800-1759**



Keith Vincent

Bridge: Customized Demo

For the past few months, I've mentioned repeatedly that Advantage Software's free Bridge realtime-viewing software lets you create a customized installer that offers a permanent advertisement for the reporter who distributes the program. To see what I mean, just take a look at the "About Bridge" screen that's illustrated at the bottom of page 5 of this e-Tip.

Here's another bit of customization that I think you'll like. Again, it's intended to allow Bridge to advertise your services. **You can personalize the text that appears when a client goes to the "Help" menu and selects "Demo." Bridge just uses whatever "Demo.law" file it finds in the same folder as the Bridge program.**

The text of the default demo file pretends to be the start of a deposition. A lawyer is explaining to a deponent that a court reporter will be providing realtime transcription that the participants will be able to follow on their Bridge screens. The demo text mentions a few of the advantages of using a program like Bridge, but its main purpose is to enable a client to practice inserting quick marks, notes, issue codes, and to practice conducting searches within text that looks like it's being received from a court reporter in real time.

You can create your own Demo.law file and use it to mention your name and describe your experience. A reporting firm might create a demo file that describes its locations and touts special services or outstanding work it has done in the past. You might as well mention a telephone number, e-mail address, website, and all the rest. If you're not a creative writer, then hire someone to brag about you. God knows you've earned the right to blow your own horn!

(continued on page 5)

Creative Notebook Sound Cards



As a court reporter if you've ever had a notebook computer with unsatisfactory audio recording quality, you know how frustrating this can be. Recording audio is quite low on the list of priorities for notebook manufacturers, and otherwise great new computers may do a poor job of audio recording. The two best things you can do to get better audio recording are to get a good microphone and to consider upgrading your sound card and/or sound card drivers.

The options for upgrading your sound card are limited. One of the best sources for notebook sound cards is Creative which can be found at: www.soundblaster.com. They offer some PC card solutions that are worth checking out. The latest, the **\$89.99 Sound Blaster X-Fi notebook Express Card**, is meant for people who want something much better than the standard audio found in the majority of notebooks these days. This sound card requires an Express Card slot. The X-Fi Express Card has a microphone jack and a headphone jack on it.

One of the interesting features of the new Sound Blaster X-Fi notebook card is that it is also

your computer. You would plug your speakers or headphones into the Creative Wireless Receiver. This wireless options seems like a bit of a novelty to me for reporting use because you'd still be plugging your headphones into the wireless receiver, but for playing music it would come in handy.

You will need to reconfigure your Windows audio settings to use the X-Fi for audio recording or playback. If you do not change the settings on your computer for sound recording and sound playback to use the X-Fi, it will still use your internal sound card and you will not hear any difference. Also, don't forget that if you run your computer without the X-Fi in the Express Card slot, you will need to change the audio settings back the next time you do so it doesn't default to the computer's internal sound card.

Creative also includes special software that enables you to control the volume settings and even a graphic equalizer which I've found very useful in getting the best sound quality. Of course, the volume adjustment settings can be configured in Windows as always. You're not required to use the software included with the X-Fi to adjust the basic settings.

I have not personally used the new X-Fi wireless, but **I regularly use the previous version called the X-Fi Xtreme Audio Notebook** (pictured at right). This card uses the same X-Fi chip and also plugs into the Express Card slot. It works with either Windows XP or Vista. It does a great job of recording and playing back audio. I've used it both during realtime and while editing and had excellent results each time. I would mention that if you are already satisfied with the sound you're getting from your laptop, there is little reason to get one of these.

(Continued on page 6)



wireless. **When it is used with the Creative Wireless Receiver, which is an add-on option, the Sound Blaster X-Fi Notebook will allow you to listen from up to 100 feet away** from



Video Tutorial Update: 3rd Edition “Interactive Realtime Transcription”



Keith Vincent

A 3rd Edition of the popular “Interactive Realtime Transcription” tutorial is now being released. This latest version features Bridge 2.0 by Advantage Software, but it also covers other new realtime viewing programs. For a complete list of topics, go to the Tutorials page of www.KVincent.com.

“Interactive Realtime Transcription” contains more than 3 hours of video presentations. Looking for continuing education units? This tutorial has been approved by the National Court Reporters Association; it offers .4 CEU.

If you’ve already purchased the 1st or 2nd edition of this tutorial, you can trade in your current disk for an updated one. See this month’s e-Tip special. If ordering an update disk, send in your current tutorial disk. (Keep your case and your installation code for use with the new disk.)

e-Power Video Tutorial Update: e-Tip Special

Please use this order form to take advantage of sale prices (ends November 30, 2008).

The 3rd Edition of “Interactive Realtime Transcription” is now available.

Description	Sale Price
Interactive Realtime Transcription, 3rd Ed.	_____ \$59.95
Trade-in for previous editions (please include disk only)	_____ \$20.00
Shipping & Handling, \$8 per disk <i>(Outside USA, add \$15)</i>	_____
California residents, add 8.25% sales tax	_____
Total: (Checks only, please!)	_____



Note: We cannot ship orders that do not include shipping/handling fees, nor can we ship California orders unless state sales tax is included.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____ **e-mail:** _____

Mail to: Keith Vincent, 728 Tirrell Street, Houston, Texas 77019
For more info on e-Power Tutorials, visit: www.KVincent.com.

Bridge Protocol: Progress at NCRA 2008



Keith Vincent

At the July 2008 National Court Reporters Association convention in Anaheim, California, the Bridge protocol achieved greater acceptance.

Let me be specific.

I spoke to Johnny Jackson, head of **Stenovations**. He indicated that the DigitalCAT programmers were already working on implementing support for the Bridge auto-refresh protocol.

I spoke to Larry Hunt, head of **AristoCAT**. He, too, agreed to implement support for the Bridge auto-fresh protocol.

At the **ProCAT** booth, I spoke to Debbie Owens and confirmed their desire to exchange protocols. Eclipse would implement support for ProCAT's Denoto refresh protocol, and ProCAT would implement support for the Bridge protocol.

Finally, I spoke to Jason Primuth at the **LiveNote** booth and was told that they, too, wish to implement support for the Bridge auto-refresh protocol.

As I've mentioned many times in these e-Tips, Advantage Software has freely offered the interface information for the Bridge protocol to the entire industry. It is my sincere hope that Stenograph will implement the Bridge protocol and, in turn, make the interface info for its CaseViewNet software available to the entire industry.

Of course, it's one thing to promise and another thing to deliver. **As soon as each company has actually implemented support for the Bridge protocol, I will be happy to help spread the word here.**

By the Rules (and Simply Magic)

A Small-Group Workshop by Amy Enberg & Keith Vincent

Dallas: October 3-5, 2008

San Antonio: October 17-19, 2008

Houston: October 24-26, 2008 (New dates after Hurricane Ike)

Earn up to 2.25 continuing education units

Friday, 8:30-4:30: "Simply Magic" Total Eclipse (Basic) (.65 CEU)

Friday Evening, 6:15-8:45: "By the Rules" (.25 CEU in Rules/Ethics)

Friday Evening, 9:00-10:00: Reporting Technology Showcase (.1 CEU)

Saturday, 8:30-4:30: "Simply Magic" Total Eclipse 4.3 (.65 CEU)

Sunday Option, 8:30-4:00: Numbers, Blanks/Indexing, and Keyboard Magic (.6 CEU)

(Sunday classes are only offered if enough people request it.)

Additional information available at Keith's website: www.KVincent.com

Seating is limited. Discounted prices for "Early bird" registration.

Bridge: Customized Demo *(cont. from p. 1)*

The Bridge program can receive text via the CaseView protocol (as do CaseView, LiveNote, Summation, etc.) or via the Bridge protocol. When the Bridge protocol is being used to provide text to a realtime-viewing program, a .LAW file is created. The Bridge program uses such a .LAW file to simulate realtime transcription. However, the fact that the demo uses a .LAW file absolutely does not prevent the Bridge program from receiving text via the traditional CaseView protocol.

Currently, you'll need to use Eclipse to create a Demo.LAW file. (You'll be able to do the same thing with other CAT programs as they implement the Bridge protocol.) Not an Eclipse user? Just ask an Eclipse colleague to do your realtime demo. Once it's captured as a Demo.law file, you can give it to your clients.

Before beginning the realtime transcription session to create the demo file, the Eclipse user will want to double-check a few settings. **Go to the "Realtime" section of User Settings to "Add Output." As your "Output Format," select Bridge/LawBridge/Televue. As the "Comm device," select "File Sharing." Then use the "Setup" button. Windows will ask you to "Browse for Folder." Scroll up the list and select "Desktop."** That will place the .LAW file on your Windows desktop so that it will be easy to find. Then select "OK" until the user settings screens are closed.

You're now ready to begin the realtime transcription session. **The name of the file that you want to create must be "Demo." After you've finished writing your demo text, you'll have a "Demo.LAW" file** on your Windows desktop.

You may be wondering how to give YOUR special Demo.law file to your clients. Well, if they're using a Bridge flash drive that you've provided them, you can simply copy the Demo.law file into the same folder that contains the Bridge application. It's the root folder, so you won't have to dig through any subfolders. Of course, when you try to copy YOUR Demo.law file into the folder, Windows will ask if you want to overwrite the Demo.law file that's already there. Answer yes.

If your clients have installed Bridge on their own computers, your new Demo.law file would still need to be placed in the folder that contains the Bridge program. You could e-mail your Demo.law file to your clients and tell them where the file needs to be placed. Here's the typical location:

C:\Program Files\Advantage Software\Bridge

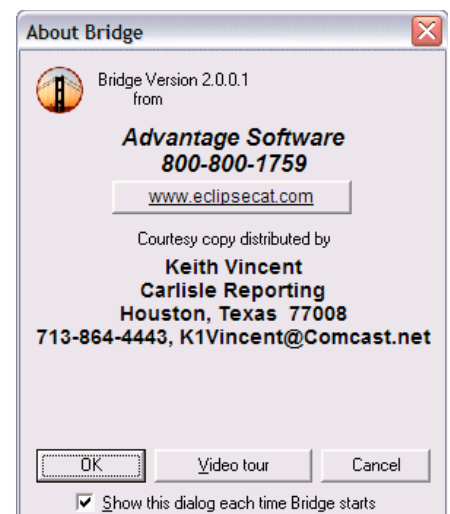
Now that I think of it, it would be great if the little program that creates a customized would ask if you have a personalized Demo.law file, in addition to asking to advertise your name, address, etc. Looks like another item for the "Wish List." Anything we can do to make things easier!

In last month's e-Tip, we mentioned that Bridge 2.0 could be run from a flash drive. That really helps if an attorney's computer has been locked down to prevent the installation of new programs.

For your convenience, Advantage Software will offer flash drives containing the Bridge program as well as a number of helpful video demonstrations. The cost is just \$10 to \$15 each, depending on how many you purchase.



The flash drives also contain BridgeDistSetup.exe. This lets you personalize copies of Bridge that you give out. Just another way to help you market your realtime transcription services!



Creative Notebook Sound Cards *(cont. from p. 2)*

I have only found a few downsides to the X-Fi Xtreme Audio Notebook. One is that it does not support microphone monitoring. It has a playback setting called "What You Hear," but it is just slightly delayed. So if you are using the X-Fi to listen to the live proceedings during realtime using headphones, it is like there is an echo in the room. I definitely would not get either of these Express Cards if you must have microphone monitoring.

I use a wireless aircard from Sprint for Internet access that plugs into the Express Card slot on my laptop, so I have to choose between which card I want to use at a given time.

Be careful when removing your microphone and/or headphones especially when you're on the job. Unless you hold the X-Fi card in as you remove your headphones, you'll end up yanking the whole card out of your laptop. Should this happen, you may not be able to use the card again until you restart your PC.

Since the card protrudes out the side of the computer, it may be a good idea to not leave it in the computer so it does not get broken. Also, don't forget to check your Windows settings to make sure your computer is actually using the X-Fi card.

What if you don't have an Express Card slot in your notebook? Well, Creative has an excellent older card for a traditional PCMCIA or PC Card slot. It's called the Sound Blaster Audigy 2 ZS. The older Audigy only works with Windows XP.

Even though the Audigy has been discontinued, you will still regularly find these available on E-Bay. The Audigy 2 ZS is also a top-of-the-line sound card. Audio professionals say it may even be better



than these newer Express Cards. The reason for this is that some of the features in the newer Express Cards are supported through software only and not hardware, which means that your results will still vary from computer to computer. The only way to find out is to get one and try it yourself. Creative does offer a 30-day return policy on new products purchased through them.

It's too bad that notebook computer manufacturers do not put more emphasis on the recording capabilities of their computers. While there are a couple of very high-end PC cards available from other manufacturers which run from \$400 to \$600 dollars, I won't be recommending them to you here because of the cost. The fact is that most laptops include standard integrated audio. For this reason there is not a large market for people wanting to upgrade. However, if you'd like to get better recording with your notebook computer, slip one of these into its card slot and see what you think.

Disclaimer:

e-Tips are provided for informational purposes only. This document represents the current views of Wil Wilcox and Keith Vincent and those who submit articles on the issues discussed as of the date of publication. Market conditions change and after the date of publication, e-CourtReporter, LLC, cannot guarantee the accuracy of any information herein.

Information provided in this document is provided "as is," without warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied, including but not limited to implied warranties of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose, and freedom from infringement.

The user/reader assumes the entire risk as to the accuracy and use of this document. This document may not be redistributed without permission. All trademarks acknowledged. Copyright, e-CourtReporter, LLC, 2001-2008.