



TEXT AS BUTTONS

1. INTRODUCTION

Normally you'll use pictures as buttons when you create links within a DVD-menu. But what you see in professional DVDs is that text is very often used as chapter links. And why not make your DVD look professional as well? It doesn't take that much skill and is quite easily accomplished using the right techniques. The following tutorial has been developed using Pinnacle Studio 9 Plus and will teach you two basic techniques.

2. START

First of all, you need to figure out how you want your DVD to look. Plan the lay-out and decide how many menus you want and how you like them to appear and in what order. I will not address how to make the background for your menu in this tutorial. You have multiple options, here are a few:

- use the pre-designed menus within your program
- use a still image
- use an other video-clip

3. MAKING THE MENU

As Fig 1. show you, I have added a few different chapters to the timeline and decided to use the first chapter as background for the menu.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

In Fig. 2, I have simply opened title editor, removed the text from the title leaving me with a black background for my menu. Note that there are no markings above the time-line stating that this is a menu (will be transparent and not showing). If you had opened the menu editor there would have been an "M" indicating that this is a menu.

In order to open the title editor, simply double-click on the title or right-click and choose open "Title Editor"

Fig. 3 is showing the normal view in the title editor. I have used the text tool in order to create the text I want to use as button. Note that the text is still marked. Choose the font you want to use along with the size. Other options are how to align the text, word wrap on/off, scaling and much more.

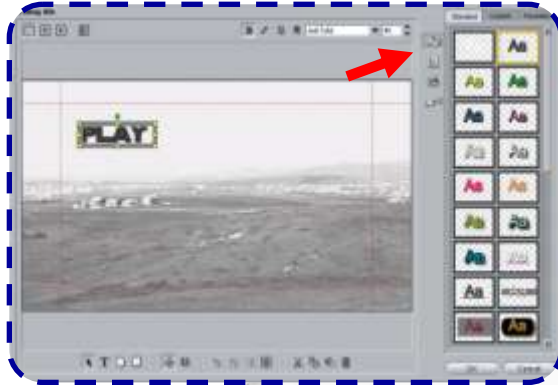


Fig. 3



Fig. 4

In Fig. 4, with the text still marked, I have chosen the “Button” button. I select “Normal” button from the drop down menu top right and I have now transformed the text into a button to be used as a menu choice.

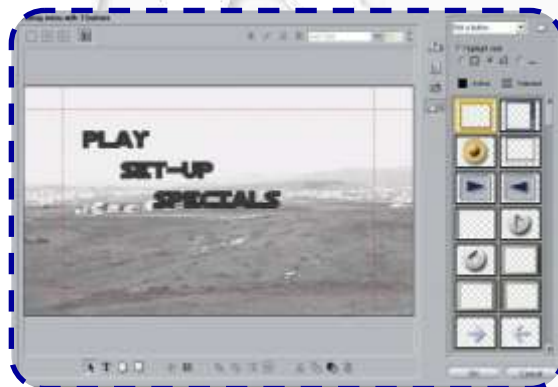


Fig. 5

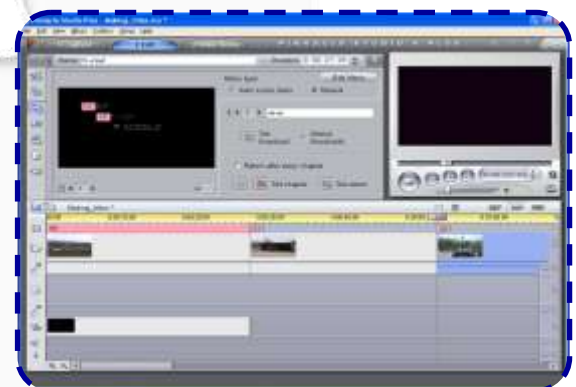


Fig. 6

But you can of course not have only one button! After I have made the settings to my liking (active colour and selected colour for instance), I simply click on the “PLAY” button, copy and paste. All the settings and formatting will be copied. All I have to do is to change the words, into “SET-UP” and “SPECIALS” for example. This can be repeated as many times as you wish and you can of course change the settings to the individual buttons to fit your plan.

When I exit the title editor view I find myself back in the timeline view and I can see that I now have a DVD menu marked with “M1” above the timeline (Fig. 6).

4. FINALIZING THE MENU

But now you only have found what you want to use for buttons. In order to make the menu complete, you need to point the different buttons to the chapters they represent – or sub-menus. Double-click on the title and you enter the video tool box area letting you choose where the individual buttons should point. In Studio this function is called “creating chapter links”. As you can see from Fig. 6, when you have made your choice the text is marked with the chapter number assigned. You have now made a full DVD menu with text as buttons.



To test this you can use the preview function within Studio 9 and see if the buttons are functional. This is always recommended before burning your disc

5. OTHER OPTIONS

If your software doesn't have the option of using text directly within the program, there is no need to feel down. There is a very easy and straight forward technique you can use. Almost all video editing software I know off will let you use pictures as buttons. So this is what you have to do – make your text into a picture. You can use Photoshop, Paint Shop Pro or almost any photo editing program since this is very basic. Open a new file, set the size, make the background and add text. Save the picture preferably as GIF or Tiff as you want to keep it transparent. JPEG will not do that leaving you with a square picture.

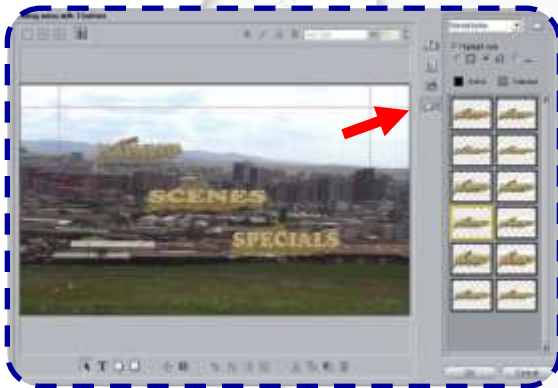


Fig. 7



Fig. 8

As you can see from Fig. 7, I have opened the same title editor window and I have accessed the buttons menu. But instead of using text from the title editor I have opened the folder where I saved my text-pictures. Importing them within the button choice will make the “picture” a button. The same choices as with the text applies of course, letting you select active colour and much more.

Back in the edit window, with the tool box activated, I can point the different buttons to the right chapters. This process is exactly the same as briefly explained previously in this tutorial.

6. CONCLUSION

The advantage with using the last technique is that you have multiple options making the text just the way you want with background and more. Using the text option within the program, may though make it look more classical and pure.

The choice is yours. ■■