

# EasyPlay™

Video / Graphics  
File Playback & Management Software



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**EasyPlay** is an easy-to-use software program that allows you to create, manage and display playlists. One of its most powerful features is the ability to insert several popular graphics file formats that play with a default or assigned duration in the list.

## Features:

### Multiple playback file types

MPEG-1, MPEG-2, AVI, mp4, h.264, mov, bmp, jpg, gif, tif, tga, rtf and many more

### Seven default directories

Simply place the files you want to play in any or all of the directories. When you select a directory, the files are automatically loaded into the playlist.

### Automatic/manual play mode

The program will load and start running automatically when the host computer starts up ... or you can load and play directories using the simple select and play interface.

## Refresh directories

You can add, delete, or reorder the files in the respective directories even while the playlist is playing. If the playlist is in Repeat mode ... often called “looping” ... the changes will appear in the next playback of the playlist.

## Drag and drop mode

Copying and/or moving files to a directory ... or to an open playlist ... uses the drag and drop convention familiar to users of Windows Explorer

## AutoCue

With this feature active, when you drag and drop a file into an open playlist, the file will automatically load and cue for immediate playback.

## Desktop Display

EasyPlay supports simultaneous multiple channel playback. The software senses the number of MPEG decoder cards in the system, and displays one playlist per channel. The following diagram illustrates the default position of the playlists. Once the windows are open on the desktop, you can move, resize, minimize or close any of them as you wish. The windows will remain where you've placed them until the system is rebooted.



NOTE: To position the windows as shown, click **Configuration** in the EasyPlay menu bar and select **Rearrange window**. You can modify the placement and cropping at any time. If you want to keep the modifications, click **Save window parameter**. The next time you open the program, the windows will appear in the saved positions.

## The Main Screen



**The controls and information displays are easy to use and understand.**

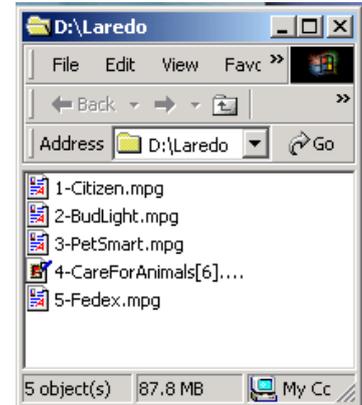
<i><b>FUNCTION</b></i>	<i><b>DESCRIPTION</b></i>
<b>current file progress and scroll bar</b>	RED indicates playback; GREEN indicates time remaining Double-click this bar to enable the vertical scroll handle.
<b>current file time remaining</b>	A countdown timer indicating file time remaining
<b>channel</b>	Displays a channel number associated with an MPEG playback card in the system
<b>play/pause</b>	Click the green arrow to PLAY – the arrow will change to the two vertical lines (PAUSE). When you click PAUSE, file playback pauses, and the button changes to a green arrow again. Press the green arrow to resume file/list playback.
<b>stop</b>	Click to stop playback of the file or list.
<b>last file</b>	Click <u>during playback</u> to immediately select and play the file located in the list <b>BEFORE</b> the currently playing file.
<b>fast forward</b>	Click to play quickly through the currently playing file.
<b>next file</b>	Click <u>during playback</u> to immediately select and play the file located in the list <b>AFTER</b> the currently playing file.
<b>cue file</b>	Click this button to load the files into the playback buffer for quicker response when you click the PLAY button. If no file is selected, it will CUE the first file in the list. If a file IS selected, it will cue playback of the list <u>from that point forward</u> .
<b>auto repeat</b>	Click to create a continual “looped” playback of the list. If no file is selected, when you click this button the playback will immediately start from the first file in the list. If a file IS selected, it will start looped playback of the list <u>from that point forward</u> . You can select or deselect this function before OR after playback begins.
<b>select payout directories</b> <i>(see below)</i>	Click this button to open a list of the 7 payout directories. Then click the directory (playlist) you wish to load and play.
<b>single play</b>	Check this box if you want to play a single file instead of multiple consecutive files in the list. Just select any file (click and highlight) and click the PLAY button.
<b>reload playlist</b>	If you’ve made any changes to the files in the currently loaded director (add, delete, etc.), click this button to reload the list. The reload will update any changes you made.
<b>current file time status</b>	This is general information about the status of the current file. It indicates elapsed time, time remaining, and the time the currently playing file will stop its playback.

## Creating Playout Directories

EasyPlay provides a path to seven (7) playout directories that you can individually assign. Each directory may contain as many files as you wish. If you are familiar with the hierarchical file management structure of Windows Explorer, then the EasyPlay directory structure will be simple to create and manage.

Just create a New Folder at the root of the data drive on your computer, and give that folder an appropriate name (see the example **D:\Laredo**). Then just drag and drop the files you want in the playlist for that folder. Remember, these files can be MPEG and/or graphics files (bmp, jpg, gif, tif, tga, rtf).

**NOTE:** The files are always sorted alphabetically in the playout directories (folders), so this is where you determine the order of playback. The easiest way to assure playback order is to put a number in front of each file ... as shown in this example.



## Assigning Playout Directories

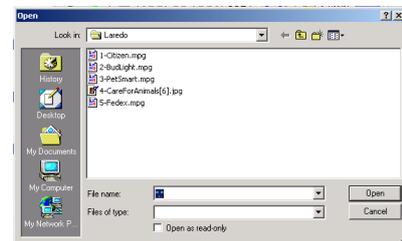
Select **Configuration – General** from the EasyPlay menu, and click the



EasyPlay tab if it's not already visible. If you want to be able to assign directories, be sure to check the appropriate Directory Access checkbox ... and click **Save**. Click the **select playout directories** icon on the right of the EasyPlay control bar. The list will appear. If no directories are assigned, **None** will appear beside the radio button. To assign a directory, click the folder icon on the right. Browse for the folder (directory) you want to assign ... double-click the folder, then click Open in the browse window. The directory will be assigned to that playout directory.

## Selecting Playout Directories

When you click the **select playout directories** icon, you will see a list of up to seven available directories you've assigned.



You can view the contents (files) in each of those directories by clicking on the folder icon to the right of each directory. Select the desired directory by clicking on the radio button to the left of the directory name.

## The Playlist

As discussed, the playlist is created by dragging-and-dropping (or copying-and-pasting) files into one of seven (7) supported playout directories (folders). Generally, you will create these directories at the root of your data hard drive, giving them names that are appropriate for the playback destination.

When you select one of the playout directories, it instantly loads into the playlist. Once the files are loaded, you can simply click the **play/pause** button and the list will begin to play. If you click the **auto repeat** button, the list will begin to play, and will repeat until you deselect the auto repeat button. **NOTE:** you can activate or deselect the auto repeat function anytime during a playlist playback without disrupting the playout.



**NOTE:** If you hold down the **SHIFT** key while clicking the **last file**, **next file** or the **stop** button, the audio of an MPEG file will fade out ... then the system goes to last, next or stop.

The order that files appear in the playlist is determined by the alphabetical sort of the file names in the seven playout directories.

However, once the files are loaded into the playlist, you **CAN change their position** by left-clicking and holding the mouse down ... then drag them to new position. You can also drag and drop **new files** into the list ... as well as **delete** files from the list (right-click on the file and select Delete).

### Time Remaining Indicator

The large Green letters are a countdown timer for the currently selected and playing file. There are two small Elapsed and End time indicators to the far right of the window.



### Progress/Shuttle Bar

This is a visually graphic representation of the progress of the file playback. The Red portion indicates the elapsed time, while the Green portion indicates time remaining.

**NOTE:** If you double-click the Progress Bar, you'll notice a black bar on the right of the Red elapsed time segment. If you left-click and hold the mouse down on that bar, you can shuttle back and forth with the mouse. When you release the mouse, the file resumes playing from wherever you released.



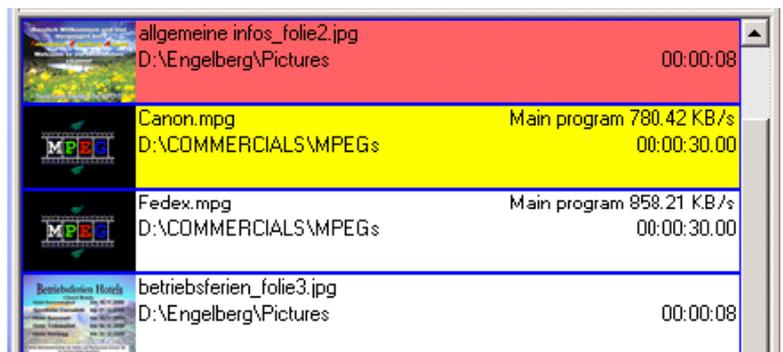
If you first click PAUSE, you can then move the shuttle bar and release the mouse without the file resuming playback.

### Playlist Display

The **currently playing** file has a RED background.

The **cued** file has a YELLOW background.

**Picons** (picture icons) are displayed for each file. Graphics files are displayed as “thumbnail” representations of the actual files to be played.



**Metadata** is displayed for each file. This data includes:

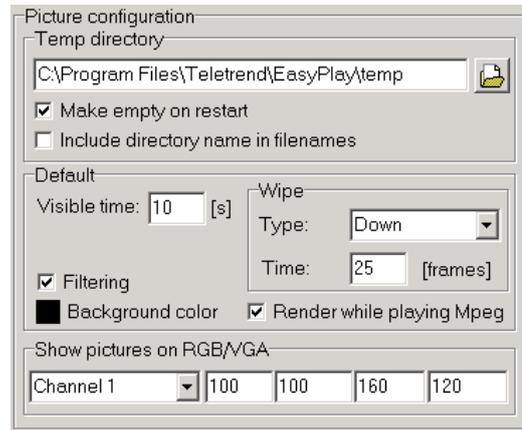
- File name
- File path
- File classification
- File data rate

## Specifying the Display Time for Graphics Files

In the Configuration menu, you can set the default time for any graphics file types you drag and drop into the playlist.

However, you can specify a specific time for each graphic by simply including the time in the file name, e.g., **4-WeatherWarning[12].jpg**

Just enter the number of seconds in brackets (NOT parentheses) after the file name and before the extension. In this example, the file is scheduled to play fourth in the list (**4-**) and will be displayed for **12** seconds.



## Specifying Transitions between Graphics Files

You can select from three transition types between graphics files: Down, Up, and Dissolve. You can also specify the time (in frames) of the transition effect.



**NOTE:** These transitions occur **ONLY** between graphics files, and **NOT** between an MPEG and a graphic file.

## Working with Files in the Playlist

You can drag and drop files from Windows Explorer directly into the playlist. You can also change the file order by dragging a file from one place in the list and placing in another. When you left-click on the file, hold down the mouse, and move the mouse up or down, you'll notice a small icon accompanies the cursor, indicating you are in drag and drop mode.

When you release the mouse, the file will be dropped **IN FRONT OF** the file over which you released the mouse.

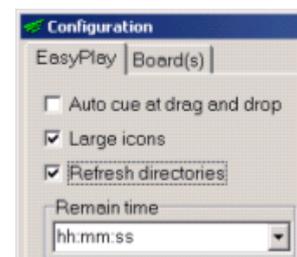
**IMPORTANT:** All changes you make in the list are **TEMPORARY**. If you click the **STOP** button ... or **Refresh Directory** is enabled, all the changes will disappear. This occurs because the files in the selected playout directory are the "Master" list. Since the contents of the playout directories are sorted alphabetically, you need to manage the playout order by placing a number at the beginning of each file name in the directory.

Example:

- 1-Saratoga.mpg
- 2-Business Week.mpg
- 3-WeatherWarning[15].jpg
- 4-Chris Crossing America.mpg

## Refresh Directories

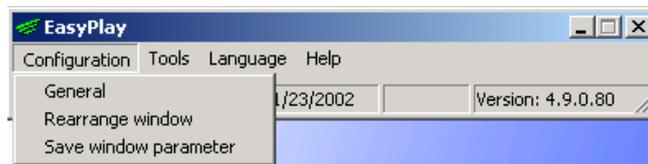
One of the most powerful features of EasyPlay is its ability to support on-line changes to the playout directories. After any change is made in a directory, those changes will appear in the next playback of the list (from the beginning). So it's important to have this option (**Refresh directories**) checked to enable this powerful management feature.



# The Menu



The EasyPlay program Menu Bar floats generally ‘floats’ at the top of the desktop. There are two primary windows you may open to configure various aspects of system performance.



Select **General** to open the program Configuration window. There are three tabs used to configure the system: **EasyPlay**, **Plug-Ins** and **Board(s)**

Select **Rearrange window** to optimize the screen position of multiple channels

Select **Save window parameter** and the program will “remember” the position and size of the main window ...so after a restart of the program, it comes up at the saved position.

## Configuration - EasyPlay Tab

The basic EasyPlay configuration options are located in this window:

### Auto cue at drag and drop

When you drag and drop a file into a playlist, the file will automatically cue to the first frame for immediate playback.

### Large icons

There are two sizes of viewable icons for each file in the playlist. Checking this option selects the larger of the two.

### Refresh directories

When this option is checked, the playlist will recognize any changes to the file structure in the playout directories, and automatically include those changes in the next playback of the list. You can add and delete files, specify graphics file playback length, modify In and Out points for MPEG files, change the order by renumbering the files, etc.

### Remain time

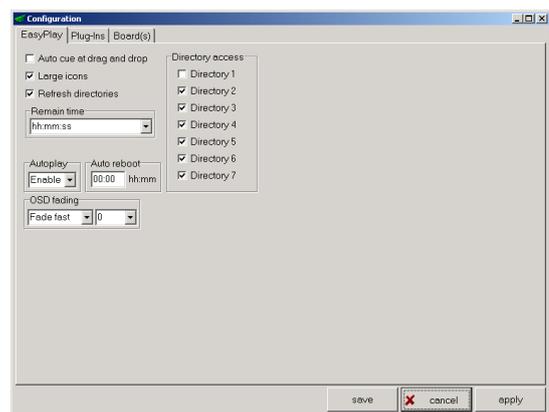
This drop-down lets you specify the display format for the countdown timer in EasyPlay.

### Autoplay

When this option is enabled, EasyPlay will load the last played directory and begin playing without any manual intervention.

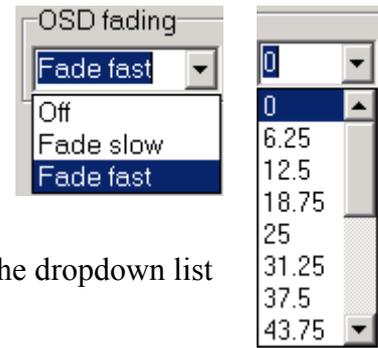
### Auto reboot

If, for any reason, you wish to reboot the host computer ... perhaps to reload a directory ... you can set this time (hh:mm), which works as a countdown timer for the reboot. If Autoplay is enabled, the system will Auto reboot and begin playing the list from the beginning.



## OSD fading

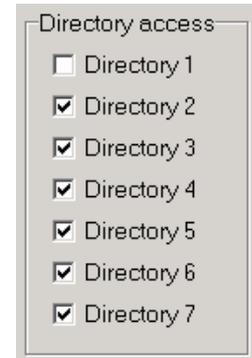
The encoder card used for displaying MPEG and graphics files has robust On Screen Display (OSD) capabilities. When OSD fading is active ... and you are mixing MPEG and graphics files in the playlist ... the system fades to black the last graphic before an MPEG file or files play – and fades from black the first graphic after the MPEG file or files have played.



You can select **Fade fast**, **Fade slow** ... or choose a duration from the dropdown list on the right.

## Directory Access

EasyPlay supports seven (7) playout directories. You can place a different set of files in each directory (folder). When this option for any directory is checked, you can browse the contents of that directory when you select the playout directories from the EasyPlay motion control menu. If this option is not checked, you won't see the folder icons in the select playout directory window.



## Configuration - Plug-Ins Tab

The following options pertain to graphics files that may be included in playout directories ... or added to a playlist.

### Temp directory

This defines the path to a temporary directory where file rendering for playout occurs.

**Default** – this set of options also applies to graphics files used in playlists:

#### Visible Time

When a graphic file is inserted in a playlist and is NOT given a specified time in the playout directory), this number (in seconds) determines the amount of time the graphic is displayed.

#### Wipe

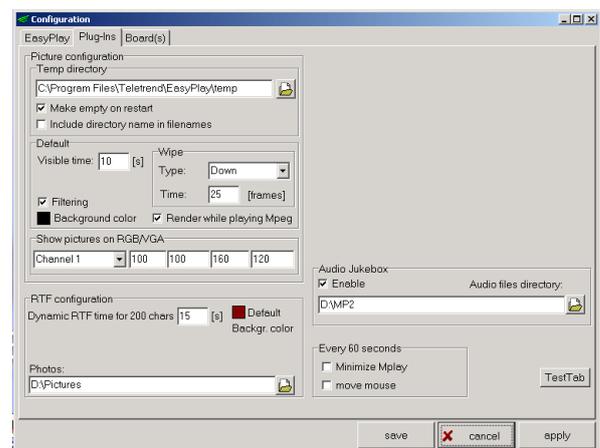
You can select from Up, Down, and Dissolve (and None). This setting applies only to transitions between graphics files ... not between graphics and MPEG files.

#### Filtering

When checked, this automatically applies filtering to minimize artefacts that can occur when graphics are displayed on a television screen.

#### Background color

When you double-click this box, it opens a color palette you will use to select a color. The color you select is used as the background for inserted graphics that are smaller than 640 x 480 (full screen). Since the picture doesn't fill the whole screen, then this color will be used for the background that is visible around the smaller graphic.



## Show pictures on RGB/VGA

Using this option, you can specify the location on the user screen to display a visual playback of the files. You will see playback on both the computer screen and the video output.

## Short keys / Forced

This is a list of shortcut keys for specific program functions:

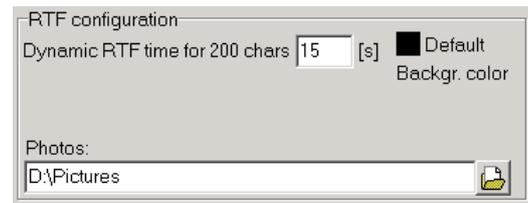
- P = Play**      If ALL KEYS is selected, then **P** is also **Pause** when playing
- S = Stop**      If ALL KEYS is selected, then **S** is also **Start** when not playing
- C = Cue**
- L = Last file**
- N = Next file**
- R = Repeat ON/OFF**
- F2 = Change to Directory 1**
- F3 = Change to Directory 2**
- F4 = Change to Directory 3**
- F5 = Change to Directory 4**
- F6 = Change to Directory 5**
- F7 = Change to Directory 6**
- F8 = Change to Directory 7**

**Forced** = You cannot use the keyboard for word processing or other applications because the above characters are used EXCLUSIVELY for EasyPlay.

**RTF Configuration** – This section provides options for two rtf file-related functions:

### Dynamic RTF time for 200 chars

For every 200 characters you enter, the page will be visible 15 seconds. Example: If the text has 100 characters, the page will display for 7.5 seconds. With 300 characters, it will display for 22.5 seconds.



### Default Backgr. color

This box displays the current color used as the background for RTF text that is not associated with a background image. Double-click this box to open a color palette for color selection.

**NOTE:** Please refer to the manual section, “Creating Playlist Pages Using Rich Text Format (RTF)” for extensive instructions and examples of how to make this powerful capability work best for you.

### Photos

This lets you specify a path to the directory where you keep any images you wish to use as backgrounds for an rtf file.

### Audio Jukebox

When enabled, this feature plays MP2 files that you put in a folder and assign to the playback path. Just click the file folder icon at the right ... browse to the folder containing the MP2 files ... and double click that folder. The path appears in the Audio Jukebox window.



**NOTE:** The files must be **MP2** files. **MP3** or **.wav** files other formats will not play on the decoder card.

## Configuration – Board(s) Tab

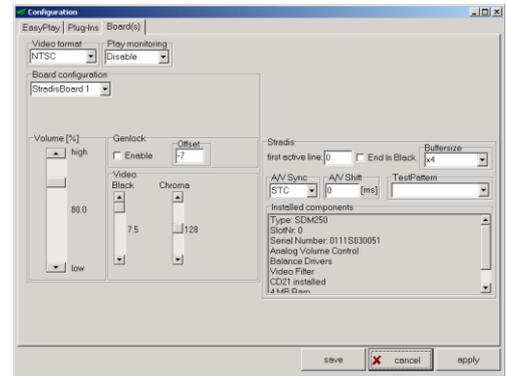
The information in this window pertains to the status of the hardware decoder(s) in the hosting computer.

### Video Format

You can select NTSC or various PAL formats.

### Play monitoring

This is normally disabled. If any of the other options are selected, the program monitors the play progress of the file. If a still frame is detected (indicating a system problem), the setting will determine what the system will do. The options are GoTo Next File, End of Play, and Reboot.



### Stradis: first active line

This number determines which first active video line (out of 525 NTSC) is decoded.

### End in Black

Check this option to assure that the Stradis decoder ends every MPEG playback with a black frame.

### Test Pattern

You can temporarily select from these images for testing the decoder board as well as setting up video monitors and other related equipment. (YRAMP; Color75; Color100).

### Buffersize

This setting determines how much computer memory (RAM) the Stradis decoder drivers can use for buffering. The maximum buffer size is 4 MBytes.

### A/V Sync

This setting determines how the Stradis decoder reacts to a loss of audio/video synchronization. STC is best. But some older MPEG encoders create files with some inherent instability, so it's best to use 'Soft' if errors occur with STC.

### A/V Shift

Some MPEG encoders build a sound delay into the MPEG file. You can use this function to eliminate the offset. The correction is in milliseconds (ms).

### Board configuration

This field lets you select any board and apply configuration parameters as appropriate.

### Volume [%]

This sets the overall output volume of the decoder card. The default is 80%, which represents approximately -10db ... the nominal level of an unbalanced "hi-fi" audio signal.

### Genlock Enable

If you wish to "lock" the system to an existing video reference, check this option. NOTE: the genlock feature is only available on certain models of Stradis decoders.

### Genlock Offset

You can change this number to shift the horizontal timing of the board to match the video reference signal when you have the genlock option enabled.

## Video Black

The system defaults to 7.5 IRE black level. The current black level is displayed to the right of the slider. The slider gradually changes the black level to a minimum of 0 IRE.

## Chroma (Phase)

When you genlock the card, you will use this control to rotate the chroma phase to match system phase.

NOTE: The other control used when “timing” a card to a genlock reference is the Genlock Offset discussed above. This adjusts the horizontal timing of the signal for correct system sync.

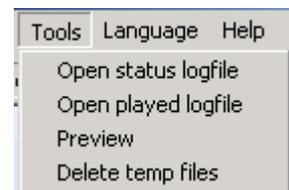
## Tools Menu

**Open status logfile** opens the status log text file in Notepad.

**Open played logfile** opens the played logfile in Notepad.

**Preview** allows you to view how graphic files will be resized for TV.

**Delete temp files** removes the temporary files created by EasyPlay file preparation.



## Language Menu.

Select from currently available languages.



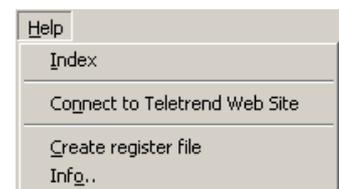
## Help Menu

**Index** opens the MplayDe.hlp Help file.  
(available soon)

**Connect to Teletrend Web Site** If you are connected to the Internet, then the Teletrend home page will open.

**Create register file** creates the **Register.txt** file, used to get an appropriate license file.

**Info ..** opens the Info window.



## Setting In and Out Times for individual MPEG File Playback

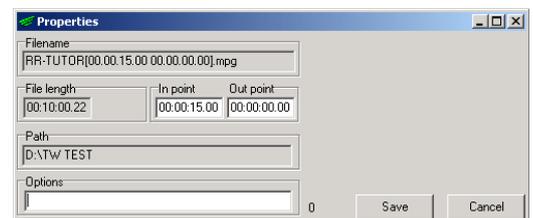
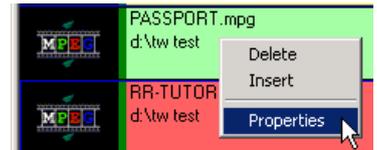
MPEG file encoding can be challenging, especially if you are trying to start on an exact frame of video ... such as the first frame of the fade-up of a commercial. EasyPlay solves the problem by allowing you to set a permanent IN and OUT time that is different than the actual file length.

**Example:** You've encoded a two-minute infomercial that begins with bars, tone, slate, and countdown. But you really want to start playback at the fade up, which is 15 seconds after the beginning of the file.

Open the file in the playlist, then PLAY or JOG to the approximate point where the fade up begins. Use the Elapsed time indicator to determine the **In point** where you wish to begin playback of the file.

Right-click the file and select **Properties** from the dialog. Enter the time code start time in the **In point** field. Follow the same procedure to enter an **Out point**. Click on Save. The file will start and end playback at those time code marks.

**IMPORTANT:** Files displayed in the playlist are only "pointers" to the files in the selected playout directory. Any change in the order or In/Out points will remain in effect **ONLY** until the playlist is stopped, or the EasyPlay program is ended.



## Saving In and Out Times in the MPEG File Name

Since the playlist files are only "pointers" to the ordered files in the playout directories, these files must contain all information that will be loaded into the playlist. To permanently embed the In point and Out point times in the file, you must rename the file in the playout directory with these times included.



Here is an example:

**RR-TUTOR[00.00.15.00.00.00.00.00].mpg**

where **00.00.15.00** = **In** hh.mm.ss.ff -- and **00.00.00.00** = **Out** hh.mm.ss.ff

Use brackets (NOT parentheses) after the file name and before the .mpg extension.

## Creating Playlist Pages Using Rich Text Format (RTF)

**EasyPlay** is an easy-to-use software program that allows you to create, manage and display playlists. One of its most powerful features is the ability to insert several popular graphics file formats that play with a default or assigned duration in the list.

Rich Text Format ... generally referred to as RTF ... is a file format that isn't as robust as a word processing document, such as Microsoft Word ... but retains many of the attributes found in word processors. In a RTF document you can specify and format fonts, paragraph styles, colors, etc.

Creating a message for display in an EasyPlay playlist is as simple as writing an e-mail. Just open a document in Word, WordPerfect, or a native RTF document. Enter your message and format it with the 'look' you want, and then save the file. You can then drag and drop the file into an open playlist – or to an EasyPlay playout directory for automatic insertion in the list.



If your operating system is Windows 2000 or later, you can quickly open a Rich Text Document by right-clicking on the desktop. From the displayed menu select **New -> Rich Text Document**.

An icon will appear on the desktop that looks like this:



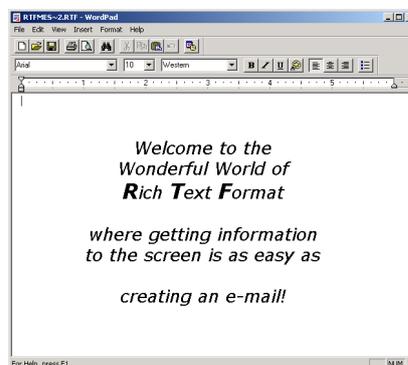
You can press the Enter key on the keyboard, or click anywhere on the desktop to keep this default name. If you wish to name the file now, you can just start typing.

Note: Make SURE the file extension is at the end of the file name: *name.rtf*

Double-click this icon to open the empty document. The default margins and vertical display are a good representation of TV aspect ratio (3:4). So when you enter and format information, the TV display will be pretty close to WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get).

When you close this document and drag it to the playlist, just click PLAY and you will see what you've created appear magically on the television screen.

**Suggestion:** If you're going to be using the same font, positioning, and other attributes in most of your RTF pages, then create a page with a generic layout. For each new page you want to create, just open that page, select **Save As** and name it appropriately.

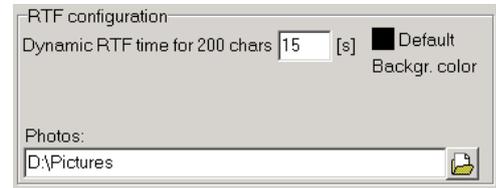


## EasyPlay RTF Features

EasyPlay provides some interesting and powerful features that let you maximize the impact of displayed RTF files. These include the ability to specify a background for the text ... as well as the ability to define how long an RTF image displays based on the number of characters you've entered.

### Dynamic RTF Time

For every 200 characters you enter, the page will be visible 15 seconds. Example: If the text has 100 characters, the page will display for 7.5 seconds. With 300 characters, it will display for 22.5 seconds.



### Specified File Display Time

You can specify the exact length of the file display time by entering that time in the file name. Example: **Clock[8].rtf** You use brackets ... NOT parentheses ... enclosing the number of seconds you want the file to display.

### Default Backgr. color

This box displays the current color used as the background for RTF text that is not associated with a background image. Double-click this box to open a color palette for color selection.

### Photos:

Create a directory (folder) in which to put all the graphics images you wish to use as backgrounds for your RTF files. Click the folder icon at the right of the **Photos** field to browse for and select your graphics folder. You can name the folder anything you wish. **Pictures** or **Graphics** or **Backgrounds** are a few suggestions.

## Using RTF files over Background Images

As already discussed, you can specify background images over which to place your RTF files. These images can be in the following formats: **bmp**, **jpeg**, **gif**, **tif**, and **tga**.

Keep these images in an appropriately named folder, and create a path to that folder (in EasyPlay configuration) as described above.

There are two ways to specify a particular background for an RTF file:

1. Give your RTF file the same name as the image you wish to use as the background. For example, if you have an image called **clock.bmp** in your Backgrounds folder ... name your RTF file **clock.rtf**. When you drag and drop the RTF file into the playlist -- or into an EasyPlay playout directory -- the program will automatically associate the background image with the RTF file and display the composite image on the TV screen.
2. When you open a new RTF file, start typing where the cursor is flashing. Example: **Background: clock.bmp**. Then click **Enter** to create a carriage return. From that point on you can format the text any way you wish. This is the method you would use if your RTF file has a different name than your background graphic file.



**IMPORTANT:** The first line of the RTF file is used to provide instructions to the EasyPlay software. Do NOT format or reformat the background information text you've placed on that line. If you do, the background will NOT appear ... and in the above example, you would see the words **Background: clock.bmp** on the TV screen when the file is played.



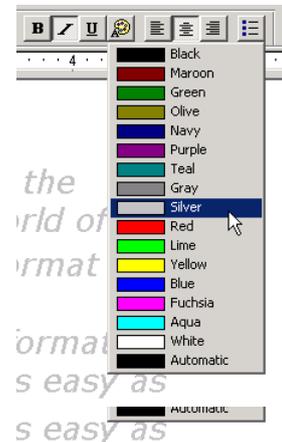
*An example of proper formatting*

## Changing Text Color

When you're creating your RTF text, you'll likely do your composition with BLACK text, the default color for character entry. If you want to use the text over a dark background color or image, you'll probably want to change the color.

In this example ... a native RTF document ... click the text color palette and select the color you want.

**NOTE:** If you want the text to appear WHITE on the TV screen, choose **Silver** as the text color! If you choose **White**, the text will not be displayed. And remember – do NOT reformat any background instructions in the first line, if you've entered them.



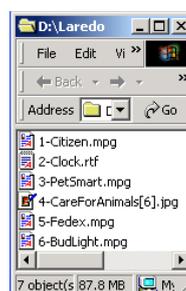
## Adding an RTF file to the EasyPlay Playout Directories

After you've completed formatting and determined which method you will use for specifying a background image (if any) for your RTF file, save the file and close it.

Locate the playout directory that contains the files into which you want to insert your RTF file(s). You can then either **Move** or **Copy** the file(s) to that directory (folder) for inclusion in the playlist.



**REMEMBER:** The files are sorted alphabetically in the playout directories ... and that is the order EasyPlay will use in creating the playlist. As discussed in the EasyPlay User Guide, you'll need to specify the order of the list playout by putting numbers at the beginning of each file name. Here is an example:



*Second in playback order is an RTF file that is scheduled to play with default length.  
Fourth in playback order is a JPG file that is scheduled to play for six seconds.*

