



MEDIA PORTAL

MANUAL V1.0

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1.Introduction



Admit it, that looks coooooool!

Mediaportal started off as a port of the great xbmc short for xbox mediacenter.

Frodo, who started xbmc on his own and continued on his own the first 5 months, wanted his Mediacenter to do more, he wanted it to have PVR functionality. However, Xbox limitations made this impossible.

This is why the program was ported over to the PC platform. It was ported from Xbox C++ to PC C#. Work started somewhere around the end of March 2004 and has been going on strong since then.

Mediaportal is an application which allows you to play music, view pictures, view videos and watch TV. Even PVR functions are in the works. This means you can record TV-shows, watch at a later time. Pause live TV, also known as time shifting, and use of an electronic program guide are among the features.

In short, this program is a portal of all media functions you could imagine.

The full featurelist is available on the website.

At the time of writing all is still unknown. We do not know how big the userbase shall be. We think Mediaportal will be great, but we are inexperienced in the htpc scene. Who knows.

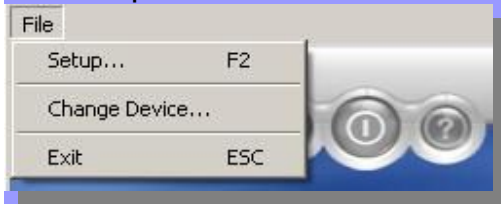
We could be totally wrong.

Only time will tell.....

2.Setup

Setup is the place to start your MediaPortal Experience.

Currently Setup can only be reached in Windowed mode. It will be in the File menu shown at the top of the window as shown here.



To switch from Windowed mode to FullScreen mode and back use the ALT+ENTER key combination.

The main sections in Setup are:

- General
- MoviePlayer
- AudioPlayer
- DVDPlayer
- Music
- Movies
- Weather
- Video Capture
- Pictures

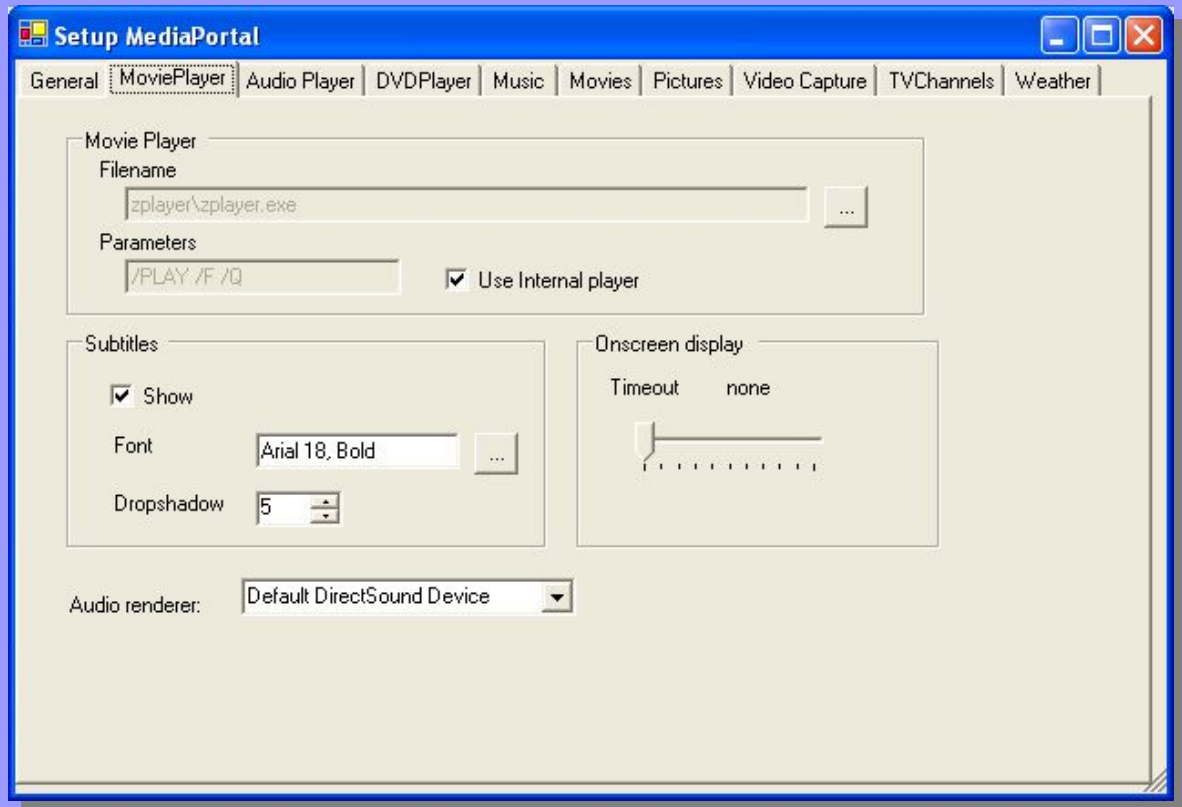
General

This section contains all settings that won't fit any other main TAB.

- **Skin**
 - **Start Fullscreen**
With this option you tell MediaPortal to use the Complete screen on startup.
 - **Auto Hide Mouse**
This will cause the mousepointer to hide. This is handy for people using a remote control.
 - **Language**
What language to use in the GUI.
 - **Skin**
Choose between installed Skins and change the look to your likings. You can download skins from the Homepage.

MoviePlayer

This section contains the settings for the way MediaPortal plays Videos.



- **Movie Player**

- **Filename (not available when using internal player)**

You can select an external player for playing movie files. This can be of use when the internal player does not play files to your likings. An external player has the disadvantage of not using MediaPortals OSD (On Screen Display) and the preview window will not work. Controls, settings etc will need to be set seperately for this player by going to it's own setup.

Example : C:\Program Files\ZoomPlayer\zplayer.exe

- **Command Line Parameters(not available when using internal player)**

Using Command line parameters you can give options to the external player. Some players have some nice options like /Q to quit the player when the movie ends or stops. Example : /Play /Q /S

- **Use internal player**

This is the preferred player. This player integrates the best because it is internal. This has the advantage of being able to use the preview window in the GUI (see a small preview during browsing through the GUI). You can also use the OSD (On Scrfeen Display) to control the player during play.

- **Subtitles**

Currently MediaPortal supports .@extensions@. Place these subtitle files in the same folder as the movie, with the exact same name, just a different extension.

- **Show**

Speaks for itself. Check this if you want to show subtitles using the internal player.

- **Font**

Specify the font you want to use for the subtitles

- **DropShadow**

MediaPortal can put a dropshadow behind the subtitles. This makes them much better readable on screen. Specify the size of the dropshadow here.

- **On Screen Display**

- **Timeout**

Specify here after how long the OSD should dissapear from the screen. When set at “None” you manually remove it with the key assigned to show/hide OSD.

- **AudioRenderer**

Select audio renderer to be used for video playback. DT/DTS sound selection is made in this menu. There is currently two types of renderers available.

- **DirectSound Device**

DirectX sound filter

- **Sound Card Device**

Sound Card Driver renderer

AudioPlayer

Here you can specify what player the internal player should use.

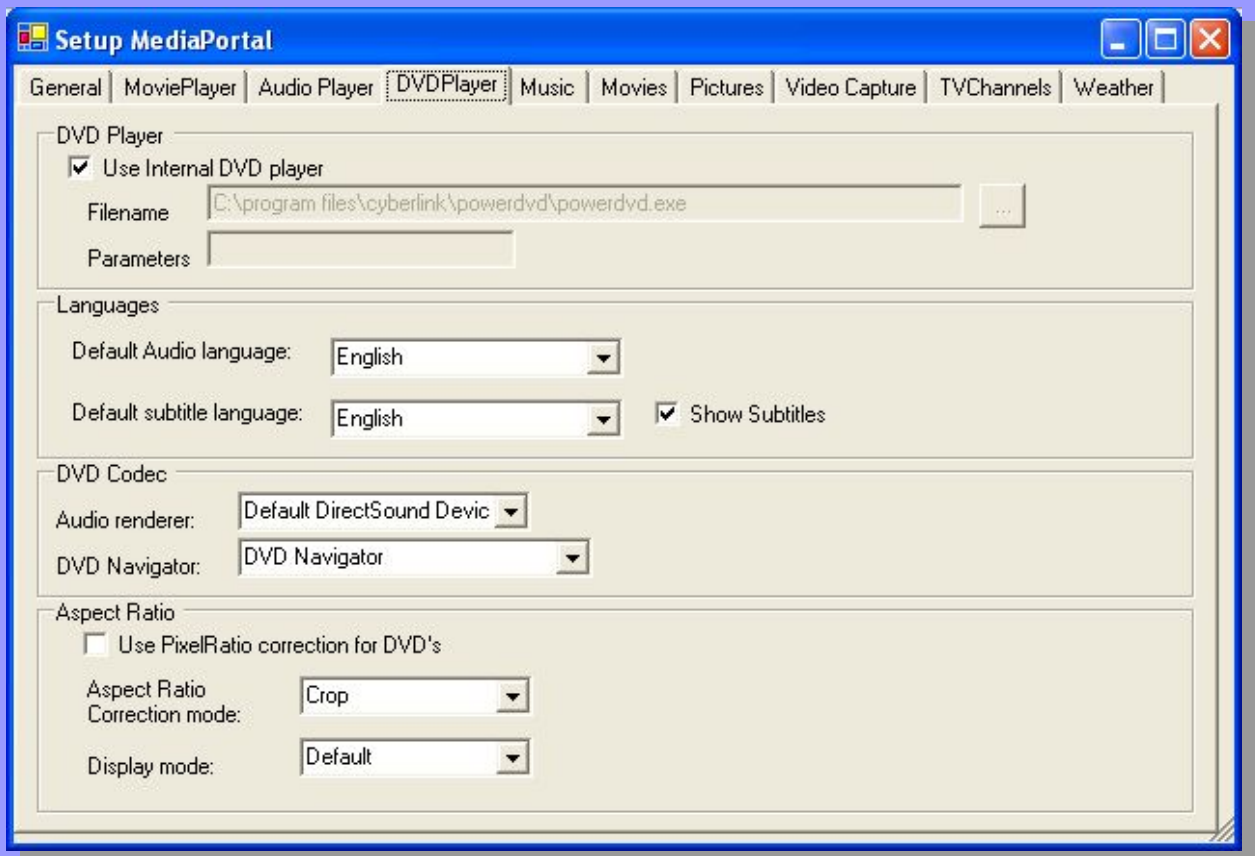


Currently there are 2 choices.

- **Windows Media Player 9**
This will use WMP9 to play your audio files. This does mean that you need to have Windows Media Player 9 installed on your system. Using this player will also allow you to use the visualizations of WMP9.
- **DirectShow**
This uses the DirectShow filters of windows. This works without having the latest Windows MediaPlayer installed.

DVDPlayer

This section contains the settings for the way MediaPortal plays DVD's.



- **DVD Player**

- **Filename (not available when using internal player)**

You can select an external player for playing DVD's. This can be of use when the internal player does not play DVD's to your likings. An external player has the disadvantage of not using MediaPortals OSD (On Screen Display) and the preview window will not work. Controls, settings etc will need to be set seperately for this player by going to it's own setup.

Example : `C:\Program Files\ZoomPlayer\zplayer.exe`

- **Command Line Parameters(not available when using internal player)**

Using Command line parameters you can give options to the external player. Some players have some nice options like `/Q` to quit the player when the DVD ends or stops. Example : `/Play /Q /S`

- **Use internal player**

This is the preferred player. This player integrates the best because it is internal. This has the advantage of being able to use the preview window in the GUI (see a small preview during browsing through the GUI). You can also use the OSD (On Screen Display) to control the player during play.

- **Languages**
 - **Default Audio Language**

What Audio language do you want the Internal Player to use when playing a DVD. This language does need to be available on the DVD.
 - **Default Subtitle Language**

What Subtitle language do you want the Intenal Player to use when Playing a DVD. This subtitle language does need to be available on the DVD.
 - **Show Subtitles**

Speaks for itself. Check this if you want to show subtitles using the internal DVD player.
- **DVD Codec**
 - **Audiorenderer**

Select audio renderer to be used for video playback. DT/DTS sound selection is made in this menu. There is currently two types of renderers available.

 - **DirectSound Device**

DirectX sound filter
 - **Sound Card Device**

Sound Card Driver renderer
 - **DVD Navigator**

Selects which DVD Navigator codec is used for DVD playback.
- **Aspect Ratio**
 - **Use PixelRatio correction for DVD**

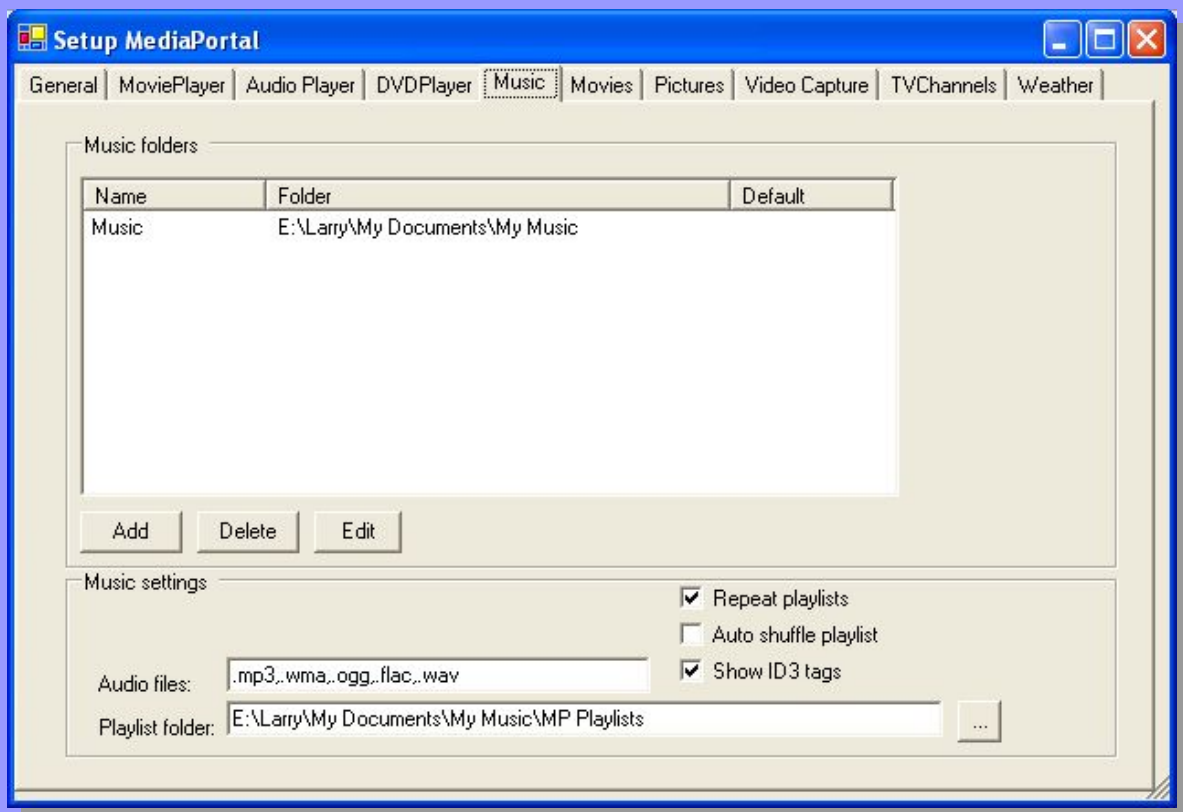
Enable or disable check box.
 - **Aspect Ratio Correction Mode.**

Select from crop, letterbox, strech, or follow stream
 - **Display Mode**

Select from Default, 16x9, 4x3 Pan Scan, 4x3 Letterbox

Music

This section lets you tell to MediaPortal where it can find your Music Files, this we will call a Share from now on, and set some music specific options.



- **Music Folders**

- **Overview window**

- This window shows the current folders known to MediaPortal for music.

- **Add**

- You can add folders by using the Add button. This will bring up a new window where you will be able to browse to the desired folder by pressing the Browse button. You can also give this Share a Name. The name you enter here will be the name you see in MediaPortal itself when going to My Music.

- **Delete**

- This deletes the currently selected Share

- **Edit**

- This lets you edit the selected share. You can also edit a share by double clicking on it in the overview window

- **Music Settings**

- **Show ID3 tags**

When this option is selected MediaPortal will scan each folder in the share when you enter it for the ID3 tags. This will be done everytime. This can take some time when having many files in a folder.

When you want to have ID3 tags and speed, we can use the internal database for storage of these tags. More on this in the My Music section of this Manual.

- **Repeat Playlist**

When you want MediaPortal to continuously play your playlist, check this option.

- **Auto Shuffle Playlist**

When you want to shuffle the playlist after it loads check this option. This solves the problem of playlists getting dull since they always start with the same song.

- **Audio Files**

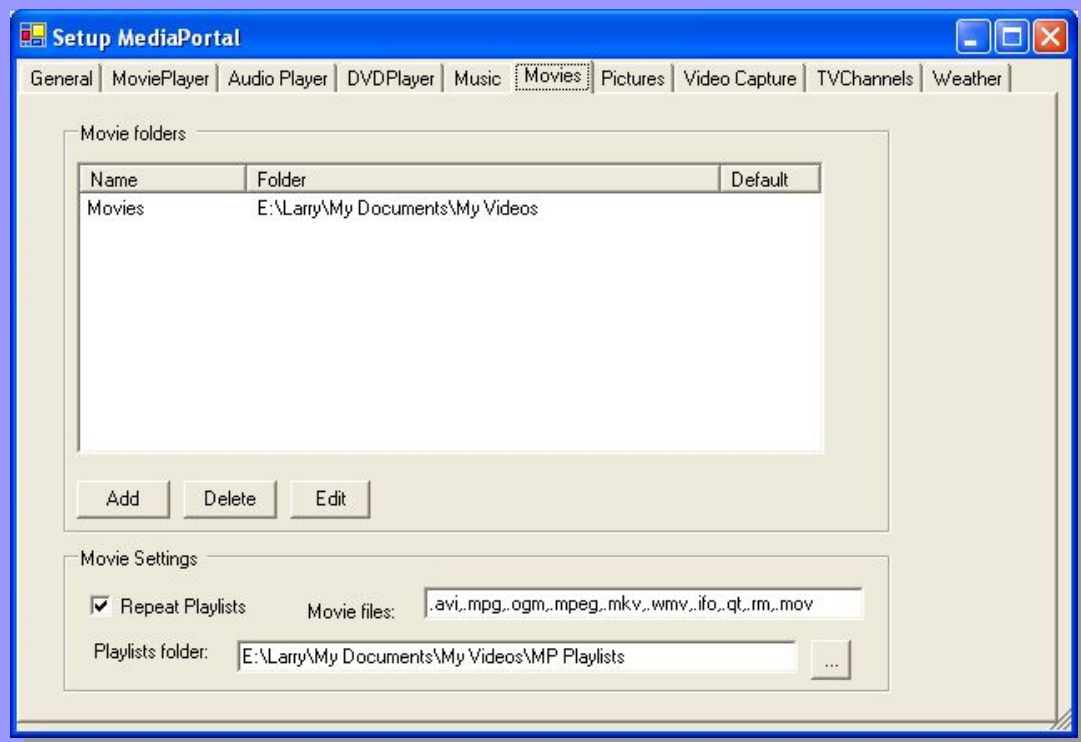
Here you can specify what extensions you want MediaPortal to show in the My Music shares. Be sure that this extension can be played with the player you are using.

- **Playlist Folder**

Here you specify the share to use to store your playlists. Use the browse control at the end of the window to select a preconfigured share.

Movies

This section lets you tell to MediaPortal where it can find your Movie Files, this we will call a Share from now on, and set some movie specific options.

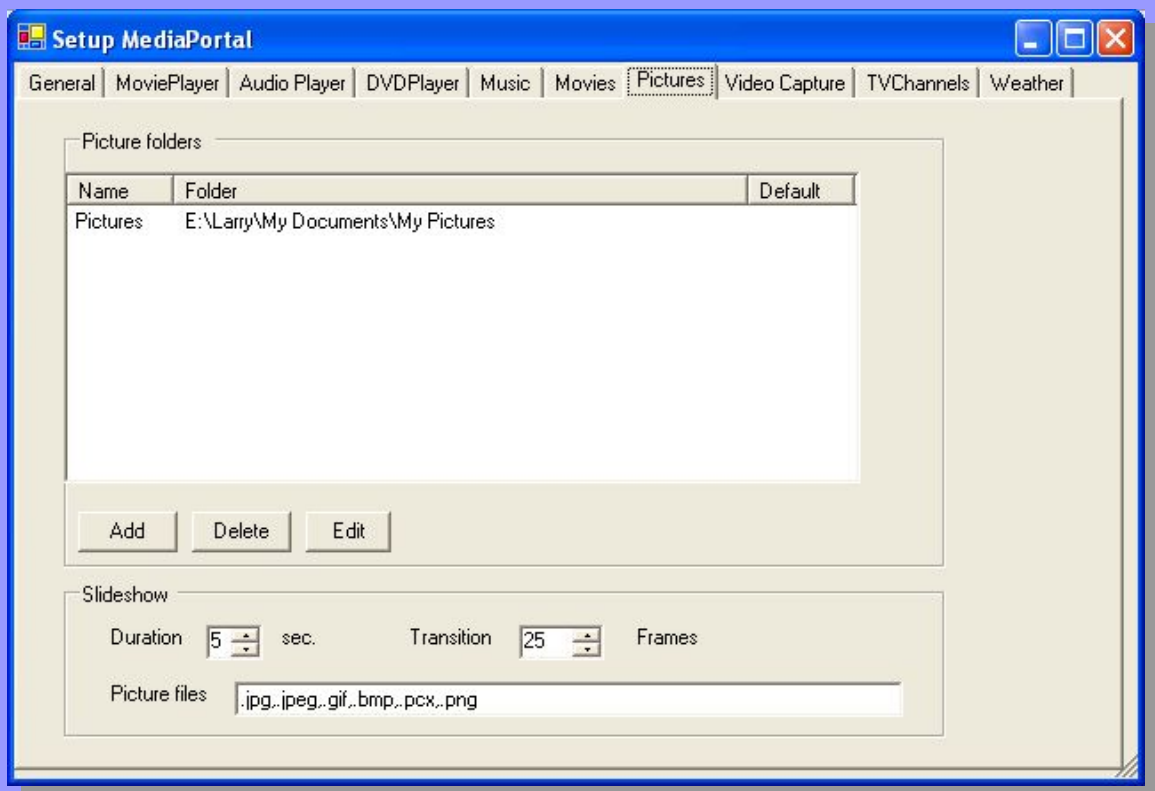


Movie Folders

- **Overview window**
This window shows the current folders known to MediaPortal for movies.
- **Add**
You can add folders by using the Add button. This will bring up a new window where you will be able to browse to the desired folder by pressing the Browse button. You can also give this Share a Name. The name you enter here will be the name you see in MediaPortal itself when going to My Movies.
- **Delete**
This deletes the currently selected Share
- **Edit**
This lets you edit the selected share. You can also edit a share by double clicking on it in the overview window
- **Movie Settings**
 - **Repeat Playlist**
When you want MediaPortal to continuously play your playlist, check this option.
 - **Movie Files**
Here you can specify what extensions you want MediaPortal to show in the My Movie shares. Be sure that this extension can be played with the player you are using.
 - **Playlist Folder**
Here you specify the share to use to store your playlists. Use the browse control at the end of the window to select a preconfigured share.

Pictures

This section lets you tell to MediaPortal where it can find your Pictures, this we will call a Share from now on, and set some pictures pecific options.



- **Picture Folders**
 - **Overview window**

This window shows the current folders known to MediaPortal for pictures.
 - **Add**

You can add folders by using the Add button. This will bring up a new window where you will be able to browse to the desired folder by pressing the Browse button. You can also give this Share a Name. The name you enter here will be the name you see in MediaPortal itself when going to My Pictures.
 - **Delete**

This deletes the currently selected Share
 - **Edit**

This lets you edit the selected share. You can also edit a share by double clicking on it in the overview window
- **Slideshow**
 - **Duration**

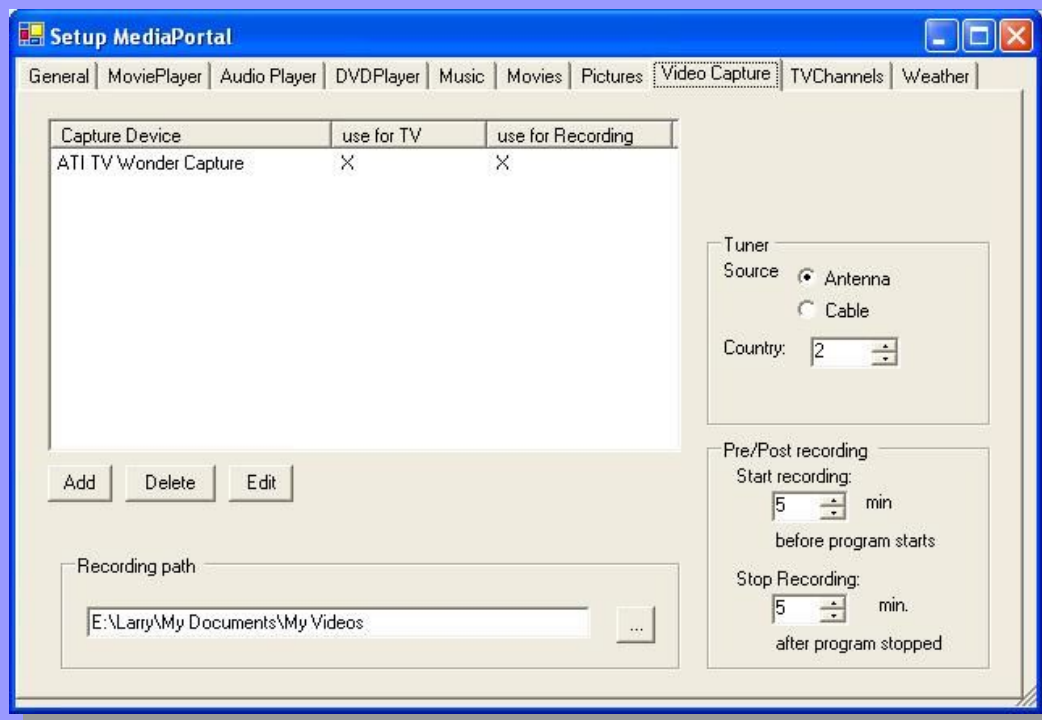
Here you set the time each picture should be shown during a slideshow.
 - **Transistion**

You can set her the number of frames that are used when a new picture slides in. The faster your Graphics card the more frames you can use. The more frames you use the smoother and slower the slide will be.
 - **Picture files**

Here you can specify what extensions you want MediaPortal to show in the My Pictures shares. Be sure that this extention can be played with the player you are using.

Video Capture

This section allows you to select the hardware you have installed in you System, where recorded movies will be stored, and the type of compression/file type you desire.



- **Overview Window**

This window show the currently configured Video Capture Cards. More than one card can be configured for viewing and recording at the same time.

- **Add/Delete/Edit**

Selecting ADD will bring up a new windows where your Capture Hardware and Audio Hardware can be selected. Delete will allow removal of unrequired hardware, and Edit will allow you to change existing parameters.

- **Capture Devices**

- **Video**

Here you must select the type of video capture device you have installed. Use the dropdown arrow to show all of your available hardware, and select from the list.

- **Audio**

Here you must select the type of sound card installed in your system. Use the dropdown arrow to show all of your available hardware, and select from the list.

- **Compressors**

- **Video**

Here you can select the desired type of compression [or none] for your video device selected above. All installed and available Video Codecs are listed, and you may pick from the dropdown, which will be used for your recordings.

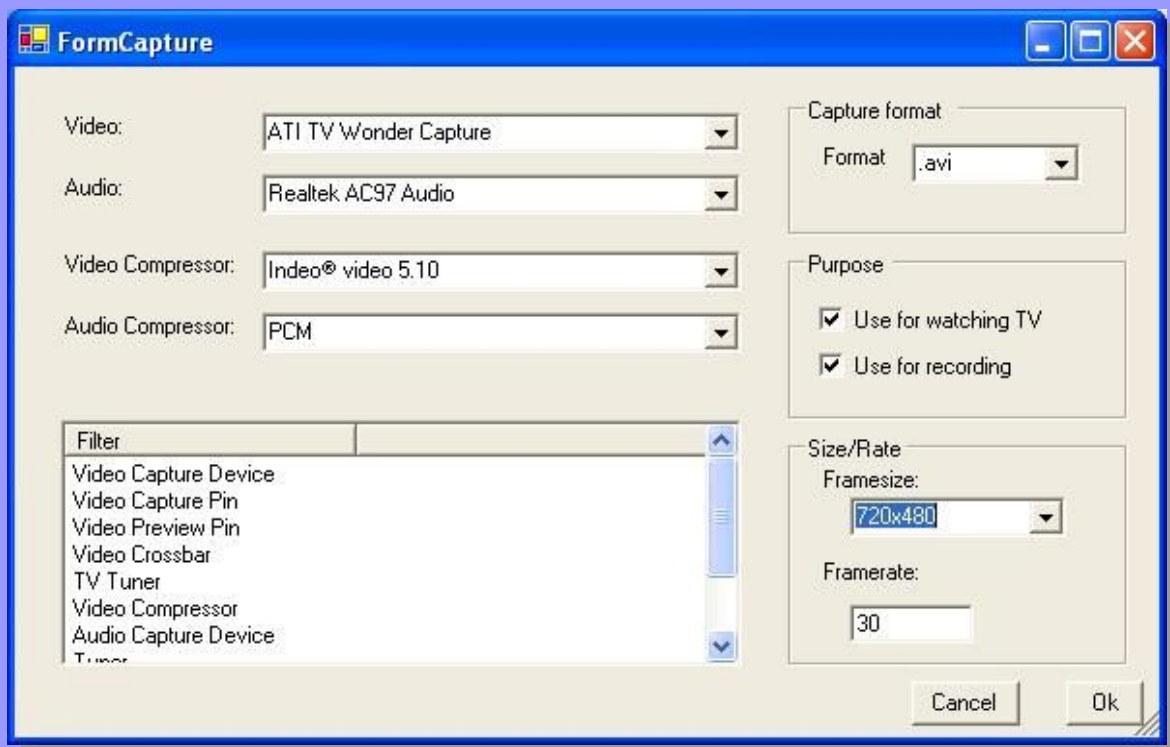
- **Audio**

Here you can select the desired type of compression [or none] for your audio device selected above. All installed and available Audio Codecs are listed, and you may pick from the dropdown, which will be used for your recordings.

*Not all video devices may need an associated audio device, as in the USB type of capture hardware, or TV Tuner cards with internal audio. See your documentation.

- **Filter**

Capture hardware selected will have associated filters. Configuring the settings of your WDM Video Capture Device is possible in this window. Settings will vary depending on your manufacturer and the device drivers installed, but may include, but are not limited to, the following: Video Capture Device, Video Capture Pin, Video Preview Pin, Video Crossbar, TV Tuner, Audio Capture, and others... Open each filter item that is shown for hardware specific configuration windows, and further configure your hardware. Consult your documentation for your TV Capture Card settings. Multiple capture devices are supported, and configured separately.



- **Capture Format**

- **Format**

The format of your captured movies can be wrapped in the popular packages. *.AVI for general windows storage and usage, *.ASF for streaming Video over the internet/LAN's, *.mpg for compact storage and/or burning to VCD's or DVD's. Selection will be based on the intended audience, and storage availability.

- **Purpose**

- **Use for watching TV**

If you intend to use this device only for watching live programs, select it

here.

- **Use for recording**

If you intend to use this device only for recording programs, select it here.

*Devices may be used for both purposes, depending on your hardware available.

More than one capture device may be available, and can be configured to record while view another program source.

- **Size/Rate**

Frame size and frame rate can also be chosen based on required/available formats.

- **Recording Path**

The default directory for saving your movies will be \My Documents\My Movies. If you desire to save your recordings to another larger partition, you may change it here.

- **Tuner**

- **Source**

Off-Air Antennae or Cable selections will adjust the seek range of your tuner. Missing some channels? Be sure you have selected the right source. Cable reorganizes the frequency structure and adds more channel selections.

- **Country**

Entering the proper country code, sets the scheme of the tuned channel frequencies. See the Appendix for the correct code for your country. eg. 1 for NTSC_M [North America], 20 for SECAM_B [South Africa], 31 for PAL_B [Europe], 44 for PAL_I [UK], etc.

- **Pre/Post Recording**

- **Start Recording**

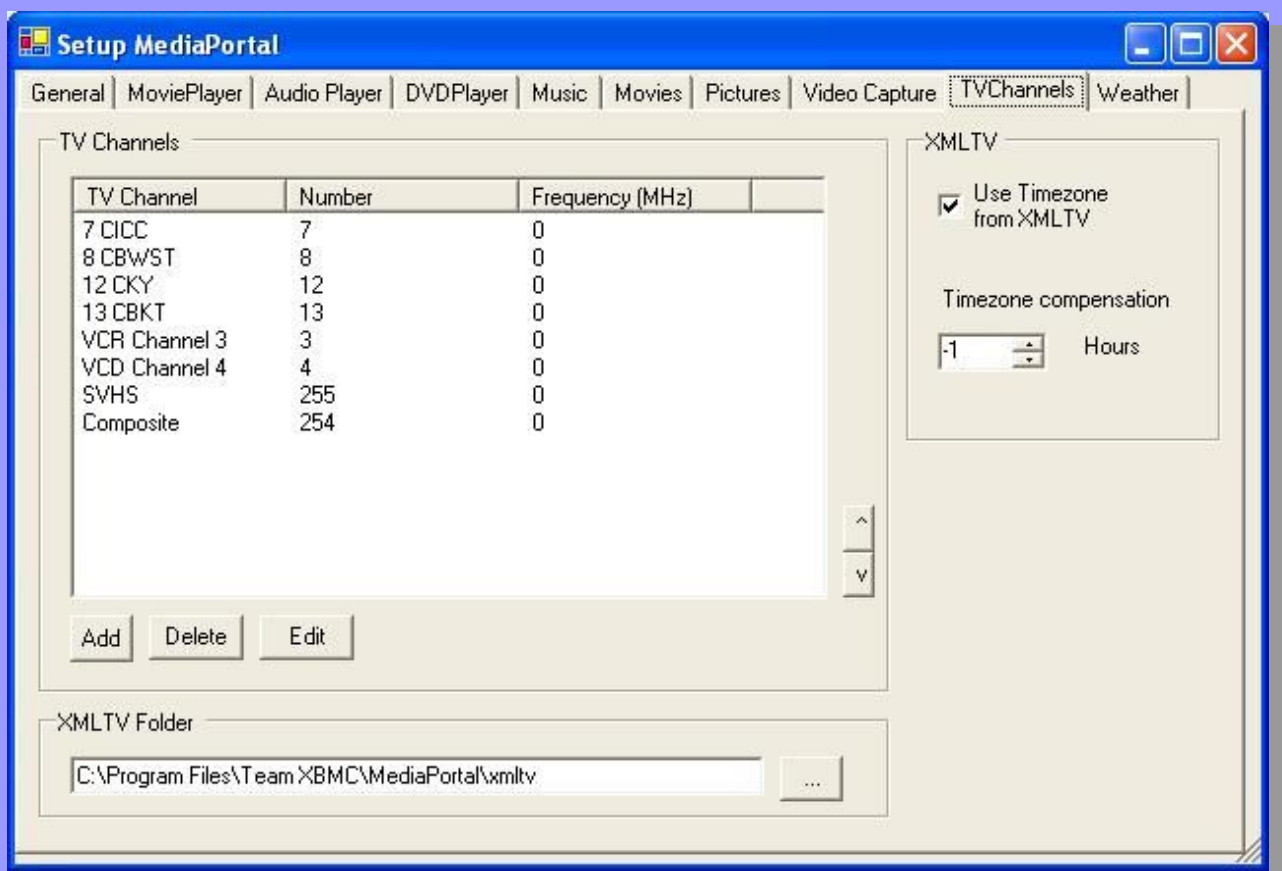
To be sure the beginning of a scheduled recording is not missed because of errors in time scheduling, you can set an advance/delay to your regular schedule. eg. WTBS in North America, programs there start times based on 5 minutes after the hour, as "the viewing alternative".

- **Post Recording**

To be sure the end of a scheduled recording is not missed because of errors in time scheduling, you can set an advance/delay to your regular schedule. eg. A late night movie running 2 hours and 40 minutes may have commercials inserted to occupy 3 hours, in order to make up the slack in the following days time schedule. *Note that the Start/Post advances/delays will affect all scheduled recordings such that an overlapping schedule may not start because of an end time overlapping a start time!

TV Channels

This section allows you to customize your viewing/recording channel list. New channels can be added, deleted, and edited according to your programming needs. Channels can be sorted [click on column headers], dragged into a new order [with a mouse], or by selecting a channel, be promoted/demoted with the selection arrows on the side of the window.



- **Overview Window**

This window shows the current channels for the users viewing area.

- **Add**

Selecting Add will open another dialog window, the TV Channel Form. This is where you can enter the Channel preference for your input signal. If you wish to add a VCR Input Channel, you would enter: VCR Channel 3, Number:3, Frequency:0 [leave blank and MP will select the correct frequency based on the Country Code]. Select OK, to add this to your list. Adding channels with the same naming convention as the TVGuide supplied from zap2it.com [see the appendix], will synchronize the listing with the displayed schedule. Continue adding your local channel selections in the same way. Composite Video, and S-Video entries are already provided.

- **Del**

Any channels that are listed but not available in your viewing area, can be deleted by first selecting the entry, then selecting Del. Continue deleting entries until the list matches your programming schedule.

- **Edit**

If you need to change some information for a preset channel, select it, then select Edit. Change information as appropriate.

*Certain metropolitan cable systems require some frequency offset adjustments ie. HRC/ICC etc, different from the normal, so that frequency may be entered directly in hz. ie. for 831.25MHz enter 831250000.

- **XMLTV Folder**

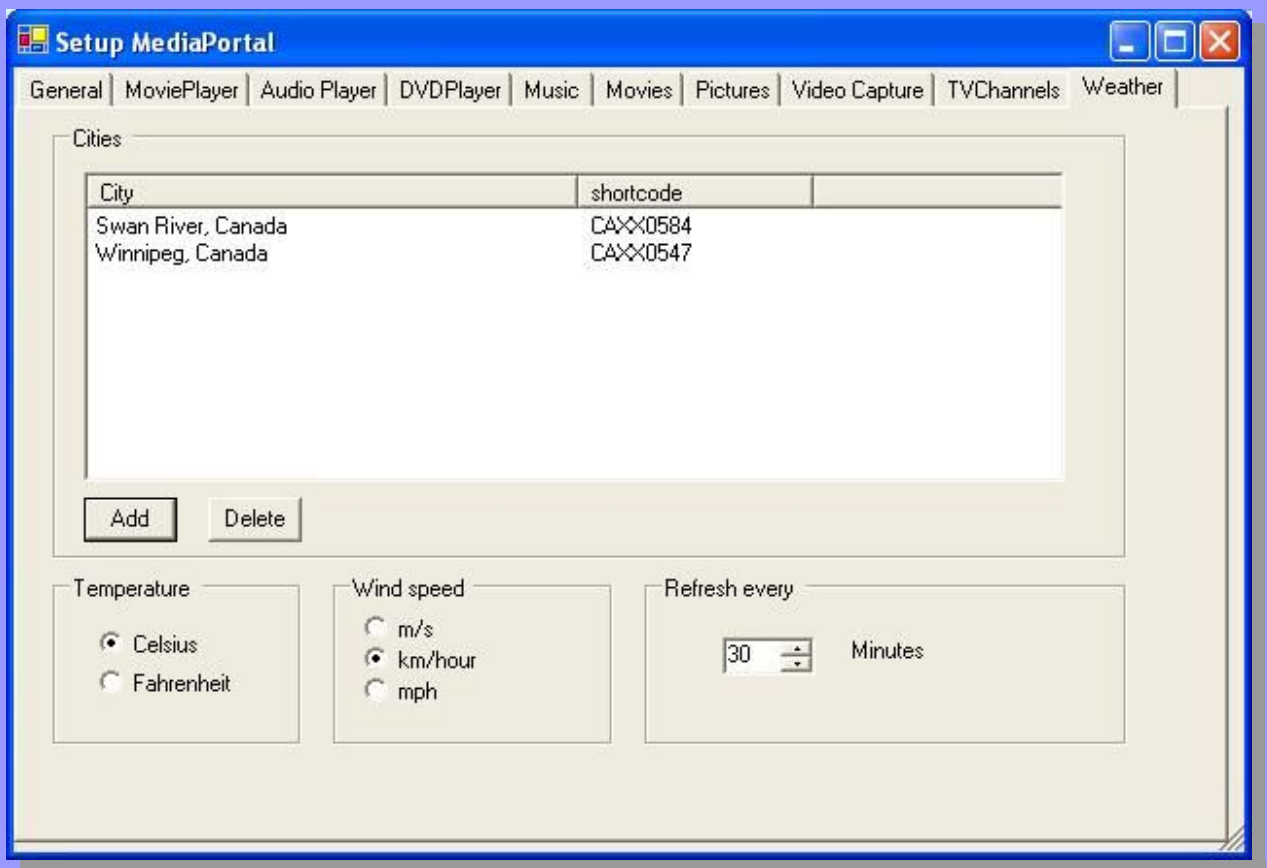
The location of the updated TVGuide information may be selected by browsing to the appropriate folder. See the Appendix for help in customizing your guide.

- **XMLTV**

Here you may decide to use the embedded timezone information from the downloaded TVGuide date. If your TVGuide hour information is incorrect you may chose to set the offset by checking the TimeZoneCompensation box, and entering the error correction in +/- hour format. Conversely you may uncheck Use Timezone from XMLTV and set the actual timezone in the compensation box.

Weather

This section lets you configure the cities you want to view weather information from and lets you set some weather specific settings.



Cities

- **Overview Window**

This window shows the currently added cities

- **Add**

You can add a city by using the Add button. This will bring up a new window where you will be able to search for cities. Enter a name, the format is: City Country ie. Swan River Canada, and press the search button. When your city is not found try to search for a large city nearby. When it did find the city press Add. You can add multiply cities this way. The information for weather and cities is searched on www.weather.com

- **Delete**

This deletes the currently selected City

- **Temperature**

Select in what unit you want temperatures shown

- **Wind speed**

Select in what unit you want wind speeds shown

- **Refresh every**

How often do you want to refresh the information. The source only refreshes once every 30 minutes. Setting the refresh lower than this is of no use.

3. General

This section describes general usage in the interface of MediaPortal.





View



Mediaportal has 3 different ways of showing files.

- **List**

This shows all files in a list.

	Billy Ocean - When The Going Gets Tough	5:45
	Bonnie Tyler - Holding out for a hero	5:50
	Prince - When Doves Cry	5:54
	Kim Wilde - Never Trust a Stranger	6:02

- **Icons**

This shows files using an icon for each file. This icon can have a different look depending on what file it is for. For pictures it can show you it's thumbnail, for an MP3 file it can show you the album art. And a movie can show it's cover as icon.

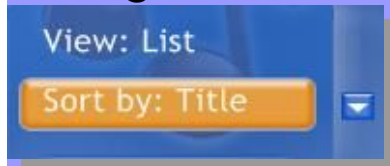


- **Big Icons**

This is the same as Icon view, but the icons will be twice as big



Sorting



You can sort the files you see. You get different sort options depending on what media you are viewing. Press the button shown on the left of the screen to switch between the different sortings like, Title, Date, Size etc.

Navigation



To the right of the Menu Selections, is the Icon/File/Folder list.

At the bottom of the Icon/File/Folder list, is the object count, and to the right, additional page references, with navigation arrow buttons.

Sub-folders are presented, as well as image files in the current directory.

Hilighting any item will either change to a subfolder view, or display the image in full screen.

In subfolder view, a Folder will appear with a Back Arrow, to return the view to the previous menu. In Image view, the Right/Left arrow keys will advance or review the availble pictures.

Background Music

If a music file, or playlist had been previously selected, this will continue to play as one browses through MediaPortal. A toolbar will be displayed at the top of the screen with music information, time, and a play/pause button. Pressing the X key, will blank the display or go to visualizations, or return to present view. While in screen blanking, the A key will pause or play current running music file[s].

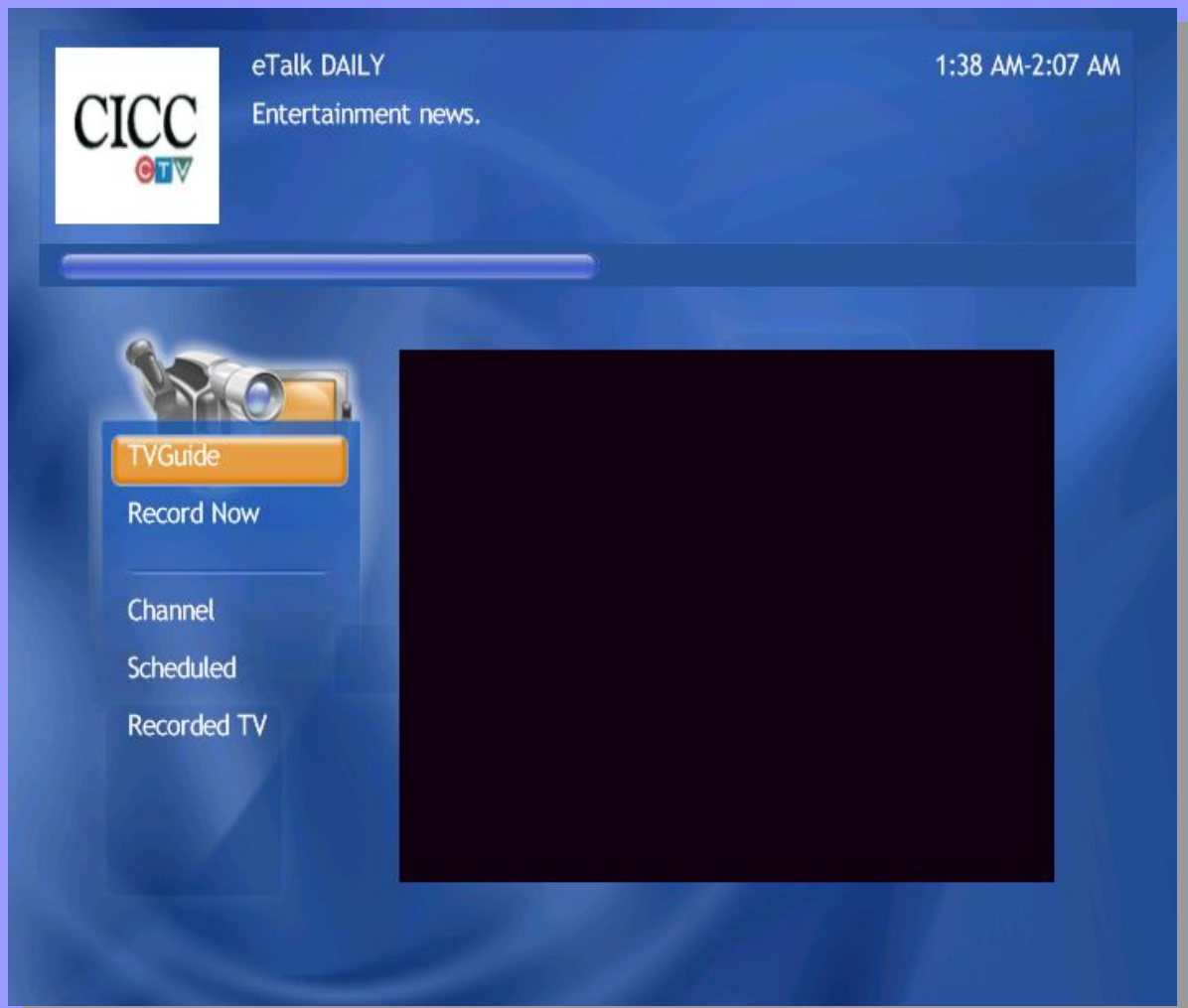


4.My TV

This area of MediaPortal, provides a central viewport to organize your viewing preferences, schedule recordings, change or edit schedules, and lookup TVGuide tables, and IMDB data and recommendations.

A header at the top of the page, indicates the currently tuned channel, complete with Station LOGO, program data, and a current program progress bar underneath.

Immediately below you will notice the status/selection area, and the preview screen. Here you can check the latest TVGuide listings, instantly start a video recording, change channels, check what has been previously scheduled, or browse previous recordings.



TV Guide

This button will open a new window where the current Channel LineUp is displayed.

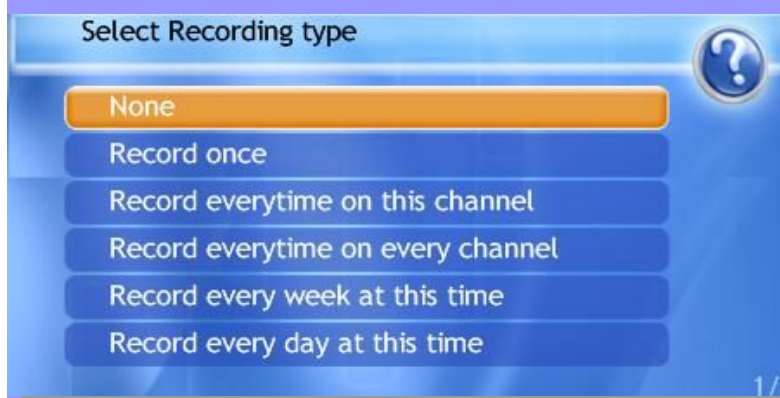


The TVGuide info can be refreshed whenever you desire. At the top is the info header which displays in detail, the green highlighted tile in the lower guide. An orange indicator indicates current time within the grid, ie. TV programs that are now running, and the extent finished.

The green highlight may be moved within the TVGuide Grid, to the next hour, day, etc. As new info is highlighted, the banner info will change, and the current program details will be displayed. Program titles that exceed the present window size will scroll to provide full title information.

Schedule a recording

Pressing Enter on a selected tile, will invoke the recording dialog window.



Select - None, Record Once, Record every time on this channel/every channel, every week/every day at this time. This will cover most recording events that are needed based on the green highlight, and the day/time of the week. A scheduled recording for a particular program will be indicated by the Program Title turning red. Reselect the scheduled recording, and you will be allowed to change/delete the recording type.
* See the appendix on how to custom configure guides for your area.

Record Now



Selecting this button, will allow you to start a manual recording immediately. A dialog text will now scroll at the bottom of the screen indicating that a recording is in progress. To stop the recording, select the Stop Record button.

Time Shifting



To view a recording in progress, goto My Videos or the assigned share and click on record.avi.
*should have an appropriate video capture device with hardware encoding installed to support this feature.

Channel



Selecting this button will reveal the callsign of the selected station and arrows to allow changing to another channel. The preview window will reflect the new selection, and the header will update with station icon, and program information and times.

Scheduler

Selecting this button will display the list of scheduled programs as entered in the TVGuide or as a manual recording and allow you to make changes.



- **Sort Button**
Sorts the programming schedule by Date, Name, Type and Channel.
- **New**
Add a new schedule to the list, by setting Channel, Start and Stop times.
- **Cleanup**
Completed schedules will be removed from the list.
- **List**
Selecting any schedule, you may delete it, change data & time, or change its type.

Recorded TV

Here is listed all the currently completed recordings made by either the manual record feature, or the scheduled recordings in TVGuide. These may be sorted on channel, date, name, or type. Hilighting each reference will display more information in the window below.

Recorded TV




Sort by channel



The Daily Show With Jon Stewart

Talk 12/05/2004 1:07 AM - 1:10 AM




Canadian Reflections

Anthology 09/05/2004 11:35 PM - 12:05 AM

5 Objects

2/2



The Daily Show With Jon Stewart

12/05/2004 1:07 AM - 1:10 AM

r Tim Russert discusses his book, "Big Russ & Me."

Talk

5.My Music

This section lets you play all your favorite tunes in the best possible way.

When you first go to My Music you will see you files as simple as can be.

Default view will be set at List, filenames are shown without any tag information and there will be no album art shown. We will first explain the basics, and then show you how to add some extra eye-candy.



Default functions

You can browse to a music file and when you select it it will start to play. When using the internal player you will also see the visualisation appear in the bottom left corner. The changing of visualisations is for now still to be done in Windows Media Player itself. MediaPortal uses the same visualisation as selected there.

You will also see an information panel appear in the top right. This panel will show the currently playing song, Play/Pause symbol and current playtime.

Playlists

Playlists are lists of music you can load or save to make life a little easier, it's like a favorites list.

How to make a playlist:

When you have navigated to a song, and you press the "Add to playlist" button this song will be added to the playlist. You will see that the next song will be selected now. You can now select another song. You can also navigate to a folder and when pressing the "Add to playlist" button there the whole folder will be added.

When pressing the "view playlist" button you will see all songs currently on your playlist. Songs that have already been played will look a little darker. You can select a different song when ever you like, just navigate to it and select it.

You can change the order of the songs by pressing the Shuffle button. Playback will begin from the beginning again then.

By pressing the "clear" button the playlist will be emptied, not deleted from disk.

Saving a playlist

You can see a "Save" button in this playlist window. Pressing it pops up a window asking you for a name. Enter the name, press Done and the playlist will be saved in the default playlist folder.

Loading a playlist

Simply navigate to the default playlist folder and press enter on the playlist you want to load. Playback will start automatically.

Auto-Shuffle

Tired of that first song that you always hear when playing a playlist?

Go to setup and set Autoshuffle playlist on. This will shuffle the playlist (change the order) when you load a playlist. This way you get your tunes in a different order as when you saved them. The list will only be changed in memory, not on disk.

Advanced features (also known as eye-candy)

ID3

ID3 is a system for storing additional information in MP3 files. Information can be Title, Artist, Album, Year, Genre and some more. Currently we support ID3-1 and ID3-2. There are 2 possibilities of enabling these within MediaPortal.

1. We enable "Use ID3 tags" in setup>Music. (not recommended)

This way when you enter a folder MediaPortal will scan all songs for their tags. When it scanned all songs it will show you the songs using the Title Tag in the MP3. However, due to this system needing to scan each song in a folder as it enters it this can get very slow and thus annoying. Therefore we give a 2nd option: the database.

2. The database, when you hit the Scan button MediaPortal will start to scan all audio files in the current folder and its subfolders for mediafiles and then loads its ID3 tags. It will store these tags in a local database.

So what are the advantages of a database?

Well, because all tags are now stored locally and in a database made for searches and fast lookups we get a great speed improvement and more functionality. We can now change the view to Artists for instance and see all artists you have music from.

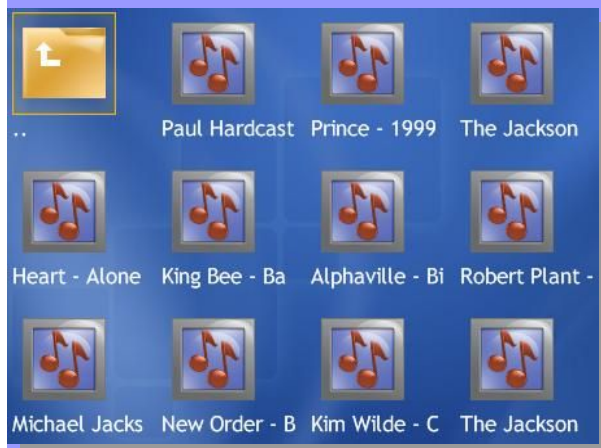
Other views are:

- Album
View all known albums.
When you browse to an album you will then see the songs on that album.
- Artist
View all known artists.
When you browse to an artist you will then get a list of the albums made by the artist, then you can browse into that album to view its songs.
- Genre
View all genres
When you browse into a genre you will then see all songs that belong to that genre.
- Top100
Your most played songs

Album Art

This will make your collection look a lot better.

Before



After

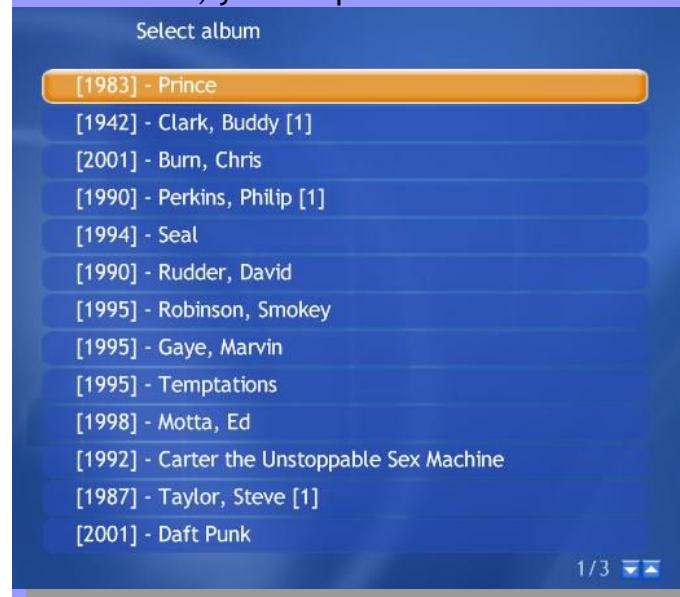


You can ofcourse switch to list view and big icon view to if thats what you prefer.

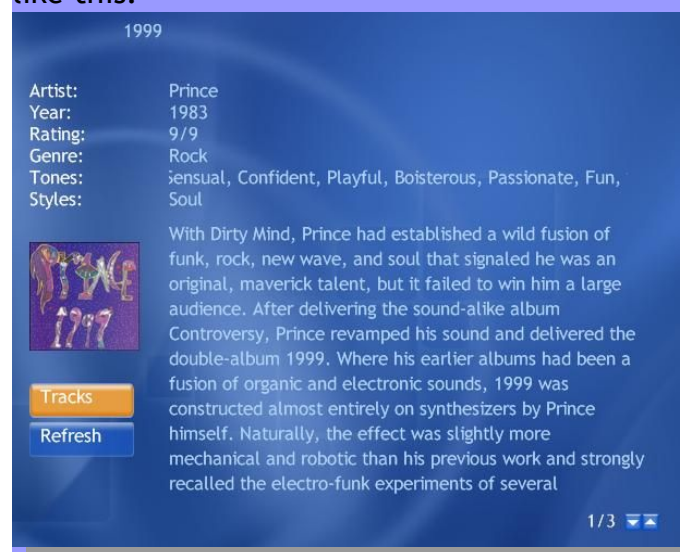
Automatically retrieve AlbumArt

Put your cursor on a music file, then Press F3.

When the album is found immediately you will be presented with it, or else, when it found more albums, you are presented with a list like this:



Select the correct artist and it will load that album for you and the next screen will look like this:



Pressing escape will bring us back where we came from, the lust with music.

Manually setting AlbumArt

It can happen that the album art itself or the complete album is not known on the internetsite. You can try again later or we can manually give the song some album art. If your file is called my song.mp3 then create a file my song.tbn. This file is just a normal .jpg file, but with the extension .tbn. Put this picture in the same folder as your song and MediaPortal will use this as AlbumArt.

Folder Art

The same way we can make songs look nice we can give Folders a nice look.

If you got a folder like `c:\media\music\rock\` then put a file called `folder.jpg` in this folder so you will have `c:\media\music\rockfolder.jpg`. The `folder.jpg` will be shown for the folder icon from now on!

Songs that do not have any albumart themselves will use this as default Albumart to!

6. My Pictures

This area of MediaPortal, provides a central location to view your scanned, downloaded, and digitally captured images, even allowing a slide show with transitions, and some minor image manipulation.

All images windows can show you, Mediaportal can show you. So the most used are Jpegs, BMPs, Gifs, PCX, PNGs, etc.

The first task to perform, when using the My Pictures page, would be to create thumbnails for all your pictures, folders, etc.

This will create a “mini-view” of each picture. It is handy to use these so you can find a picture more easily.

Selecting the Create Thumbs, will begin a dialog box, indicating the name of the current picture, total pictures, and the progress of creating thumbs.

This should be performed for each directory where pictures may be stored.

The thumbs made for folders are made using the first 4 pictures it finds in the folder like this:



Once the Create Thumbs has completed, browsing of the thumbnails is possible, and a selection from the list can be made. Selecting one of the images puts you into full screen mode, where image rotation is possible.

Select the image, press R to rotate 90[degrees], until an upside down or sideways image is of the correct orientation.

Now, use left/right arrow keys to continue to the next/previous image, and make more changes as needed.

At the same time, one can zoom-in to the image by either pressing A, or the Enter key.

Each key press will zoom the image one step, according to the onscreen toolbar reference.

The arrow keys now can be used to move the zoom window around the image.

The toolbar reference also indicates the dimensions of the position of the zoom window.

Pressing the X key will zoom-out one step from the previous zoom level.

Pressing escape, will backup to the previous level, and all rotation settings will be saved.



7.My Videos

This section lets you play and organise all your favorite videos in the best possible way.

When you first go to My Videos you will see your files as simple as can be.

Default view will be set at List, filenames are shown with default icons. We will first explain the basics, and then show you how to add some extra eye-candy and functionality.



Default functions

You can browse to a video file and select it to start playback. Playback will now start in full screen mode or, when using windowed mode, use the full window. Default play controls are available to a user like pause, fast-forward, rewind and stop. Pressing X during a movie in fullscreen will switch to the GUI but the movie will keep on playing. You will see a small preview in the bottom left corner.

Navigating in a video

you can skip to a certain point in the movie by entering the time. So pressing 01:00 will go 1 hour into the movie. You can also use the On Screen Display to controll the video. See the OSD section of the manual for more information.

Play DVD

Selecting this button on the main My Videos will start the playback of the DVD in your drive. During DVD playback you can use default control buttons and also:

- jump to a time position [hhmm],
- invoke Menu [m]
- jump to next chapter [n]
- jump to previous chapter [p]
- Select audio language
- Select Subtitles

Stack/Unstack

Movies made up of two or more title files, can be shown and played as 1 file.

There are 2 ways of stacking:

1. Using "Manual stack" by renaming files

By naming the 2 files exactly the same but ending them in -cd1, -cd2 etc MP will know that these belong to eachother.

Example: movie-cd1.avi, movie-cd2.avi, movie-cd3.avi.

These files will always be shown stacked.

2. Using the "Auto stack" by letting MP figure out what files belong to eachother.

MediaPortal will compare the names, names 90% similar to each other will be stacked.

This is a little less sure ofcourse. Especially on short names.

Auto mode will only work when you press the STACK button.

Playing Stacked files

When you start a stacked file, you will see the same number of cd's appear in the top right as this movies has parts. This will let you select what part you want to start watching.



The golden disc is the part you will start. Counting goes from left to right. When the a part finished the next part will automatically start to play.

Playlists

Playlists are the same as playlists for music, you can make a playlist of music videos for example stored in different locations and let this playlist loop. You can load or save them to make life a little easier, it's like a favorites list.

How to make a playlist:

When you have navigated to a video, and you press the “Add to playlist” button this song will be added to the playlist. You will see that the next video will be selected now. You can also navigate to a folder and when pressing the “Add to playlist” button there the whole folder will be added.

When pressing the “view playlist” button you will see all videos currently on your playlist. Videos that have allready been played will look a little darker. You can select a different video when ever you like, just navigate to it and select it.

You can change the order of the videos by pressing the Shuffle button. Playback will then begin from the beginning again.

By pressing the “clear” button the playlist will be emptied, not deleted from disk.

Saving a playlist

You can see a “Save” button in this playlist window. Pressing it will popup a window asking you for a name. Enter the name, press Done and the playlist will be saved in the default playlist folder you assigned in setup.

Loading a playlist

Simply navigate to the default playlist folder and press enter on the playlist you want to load. Playback will start automatically.

Auto-Shuffle

Tired of that first video that you always see when playing a playlist?

Go to setup and set Autoshuffle playlist on. This will shuffle the playlist (change the order) when you load a playlist. This way you get your vids in a different order as when you saved them. The list will only be changed in memory, not on disk.

Advanced features (also known as eye-candy)

IMDB

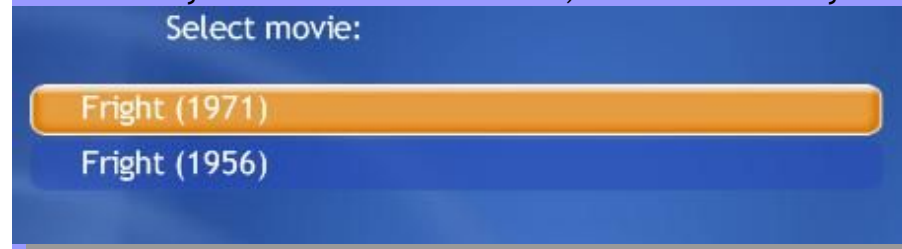
Wouldn't it be cool if you can see what a movie is about? See what actors play in it, the length of the movie, see what the tagline is of the movie or how people rate this movie? And even better, wouldn't it be nice if MediaPortal would tell you what DVD or CD to insert when you selected a certain movie?

This is all possible! With MediaPortal and the use of IMDB.

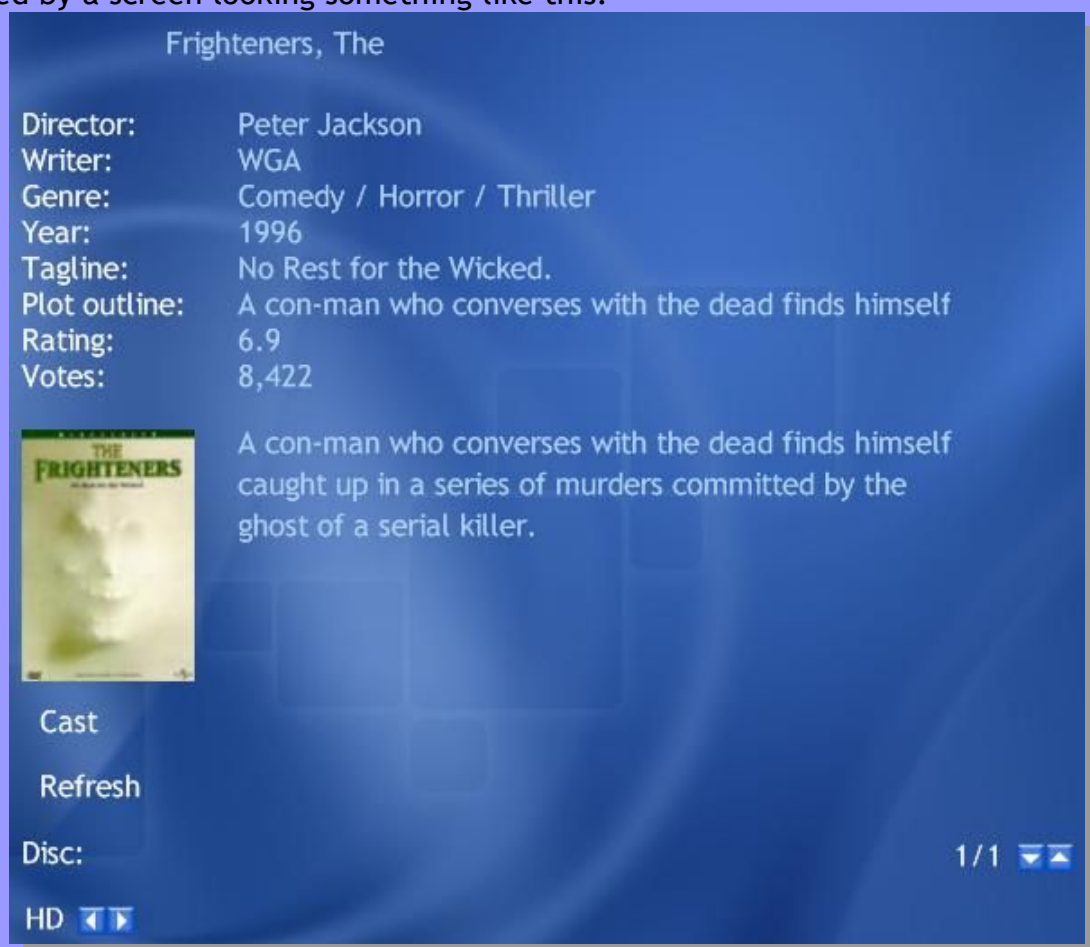
IMDB is short for International Movie Database. This is an online database with all sorts of information about movies and actors, kinda like the album database used for music.

So, how to use it?

Simply move the cursor to a movie and then press F3. When the movie is found immediately it will show you the found information, else it will show you a list like this:



Select the correct movie and press enter. Depending on the info available you will now be presented by a screen looking something like this.



Cool huh?

At the left you see a button called “Cast”. Pressing this will show you the cast of the movie. Pressing Refresh lets you do a manual research of a movie for when you or the auto-scan feature chose the wrong movie.

In the previous sentence you saw I talked about an auto-scan function. This function scans all your movies and will look them up on IMDB. Since this is a computer it can add some different movieinfo to the movie. As explained in previous section you can manually change the info. However, it is still a time saver the first time.

The coverart found will be used as icon for the movie now

All the looked up info is stored in a database. Just like the music database.

This means you can also browse your database with several different views.

You can set the view on :

- Movies
View all movies in the “norma” folder view browsing the shares.
- Genres
View all genres you have movies off.
When entering a genre you will be presented with all movies in that genre you have.
- Actors
View all actors that played in the movies you have.
When selecting an actor you will be presented with all movies the actor played in.
- Year
View all years you have a movie released in.
When entering a year, you will get a list with all movies released in this year.
- Title
Show all movies by their title given by IMDB.

During these views you can sort the movies by:
Name, Year and Rating.

IMDB Art

This will make your collection look a lot better.

Before



After



You can ofcourse switch to list view and big icon view to if thats what you prefer.

Manually setting IMDBArt

It can happen that the movie art itself or the complete movie is not known on the internet site. You can try again later or we can manually give the movie some art. If your file is called my movie.avi then create a file my movie.tbn. This file is just a normal .jpg file, but with the extension .tbn. Put this picture in the same folder as your movie and MediaPortal will use this as IMDBArt.

Folder Art

The same way we can make movies look nice we can give Folders a nice look. If you got a folder like c:\media\movies\horror\ then put a file called folder.jpg in this folder so you will have c:\media\movies\horror\folder.jpg. The folder.jpg will be shown for the folder icon from now on!

8. My Weather

This area of MediaPortal, provides a central viewport on local, national and international weather forecasts.

On entering My Weather, the current days forecast is displayed for the default city. The lower half displays, with visual icons, and detailed info, the remainder of the 4 day forecast.

Icons and text visually present the overview, and hi-lo temperatures. Each user defined location, can then be selected in sequence, displaying similar information for area of interest. Current information can be refreshed at any time.





My Weather

Refresh

Swan River ▾ ▹




Partly Cloudy

Swan River, Canada

5/12/04 7:00 AM Local Time

Temp	1°C
Feels Like	-5°C
UV Index	0 Minimal
Wind	From NNE at 27 km/h
Dew Point	-5°C
Humidity	66%

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4°C -3°C	9°C -1°C	9°C -2°C	14°C 1°C
			
Rain / Snow Showers	Mostly Cloudy	Rain / Snow Showers	Partly Cloudy

9.Settings

Set some systems using the normal GUI. Handy in full screen mode. Also some specific GUI settings are found here.

Screen Calib

Here GUI tuning is accomplished.

GUI Calibration

With GUI calibration you can shift the image up,down, left or right. It is to center the GUI.



Screen calibration

A very powerfull feature of Mediaportal is the ability to change the Screencalibration and ratio.

A thing that some systems do not take into account is that pixelratio is not always 1. The pixel on an lcd monitor is square and on a TV it's not. Due to the complexness and differences on ratios MediaPortal has a flexible system for setting the ratio on your screen.

We will use an example to explain this a little better:

Resolution : 720x576

TV : 16x9 widescreen PAL

TV mode >anamorphic widescreen (stretched)

The good in this mode for widescreen is that you have the most information on screen without overscanning a lot.

The bad is that everything looks stretched. So lets compensate.

- Set TV in widescreen (stretched) mode.
- Go to Settings > My video > Calibrate Screen
You Get a black screen with an arrow top left. You can alter the overscan now. This will however compress the image a bit wich will cause some quality loss. However, you won't noctice this on most TV's. But the best is to leave the settings at 0,0.
- Pressing enter you can set the bottom right corner.
- Next step is setting the position of the subtitles.
- Then we can change the Pixel ratio. You get a square on screen. Measure the width and height of the square and change the setting so it will get a perfect square. Do not use sight! use a ruler.
- Next step is setting the position of the OSD, On Screen Display.
- Pressing escape will now bring us back to the settings menu.

Now pictures, icons, thumbnails, video and DVD will be corrected to use this pixel ratio.

DVD however does not need pixel correction, it allready compensated itself!. So in the file menu DVD player turn off the option to use the pixel ratio on DVD.

Everything now plays with Perfect Aspect Ratio and you will never have to switch screen mode on your TV. You will always have the OSD on the same place, always have subs on the same spot. And always use maximum screenspace.

It is normal for some widescreen movies to still have black bars on a widescreen TV.

This is because these movies do not have an Aspect ratio of 16x9.

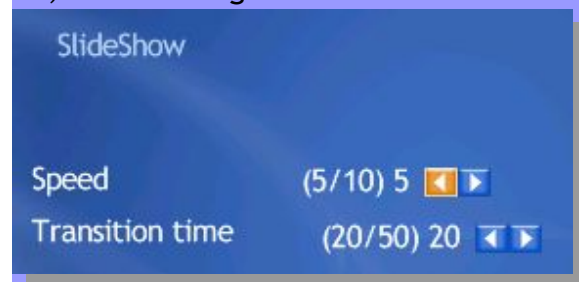
My Music

Music configuration and database management can be adjusted here.

- **Shuffle Playlist on Load**
Shuffle the playlist you load, this way you get the same songs in a different order each time you load the playlist
- **Enable MP3 Tags**
Load the MP3 Tags of every song everytime you enter a folder.
This makes the system slow, using the database is preferred. See My Music chapter.
- **Reorganize My Music Database**
When you deleted some songs you need to reorganise the database.
- **Delete Album**
This will show you a list of all albums in the database. You can select one to remove.
- **Delete Album Info**
This will show you a list of all albums in the databse, Selecting one will only select the albuminfo connected to this album.

SlideShow

You may set the time duration of the slides to be shown, up to 20 seconds, and the transition time, in frames, up to 50. The more frames set, the smoother the transition will be, but the longer it will take to accomplish the transition.



10.Appendix

Additional information relating to the customizing of MediaPortal.

Skins

Many new skins are/have been developed for MediaPortal.



To implement a new skin, uncompress the package, and place in the following directory:
C:\Program Files\Team MediaPortal\MediaPortal\skin

The package is usually named, and this name will show up in the Files/Settings/General tab. Select your new skin, and voila - a new view on MediaPortal!

Want to create your own? Beginner tools are available for learning the craft. Check out www.stardock.net for free tools, and tutorials. Hang out at the mediaportal forum, and interact with the likes of vaeanu, and wabid...

Country Codes

How to setup the Country Code.

With the right country code MediaPortal knows:

- If you're using NTSC/PAL/Secam
- the default frequencies for a channel number
(for example channel 28= 531.25MHz in country A but in country B channel 28 can be 831.25MHz)

In order to help you more, we made a short list of country codes that you need to set. If you have problems with the found channels (like only black & white image or no sound) change the code to one of the following:

- USA=1 -if you need NTSC_M video standard
- Canada=2 - if you need NTSC_M video standard
- Japan=81 -if you need NTSC_M_J video standard
- Germany=49 -if you need PAL_B or PAL_G video standard
- Romania=40 -if you need PAL_D or PAL_K video standard
- Falkland Is=500 -if you need PAL_I video standard
- Argentina=54 -if you need PAL_N_COMBO video standard
- Brazil=55 -if you need PAL_M video standard
- Morocco=212 -if you need SECAM_B video standard
- Gambia=220 -if you need SECAM_K video standard
- Congo=242 -if you need SECAM_D video standard
- France=33 -if you need SECAM_L video standard
- Monaco=377 if you need SECAM_G video standard

More information on other countries can be found here:

http://msdn.microsoft.com/library/default.asp?url=/library/en-us/directx9_c/directx/htm/countryassignments.asp

XMLTV

How to localize the TV schedule:

Find and download the XMLTV-0.5.32-win32 program from
http://sourceforge.net/project/showfiles.php?group_id=39046

1. Install XMLTV into it's default directory, ie. [c:\xmltv](#)
2. To configure, run: `xmltv.exe tv_grab_[your specific zone] --configure` [see XMLTV docs]
Set your time zone, user id, password, and desired Tv Listings, as per your zap2it.com account [see docs supplied with xmltv for a preferred certificate and visit labs.zap2it.com to sign up].
3. Create an update batch file, `update.bat`, and insert the following using plain text and appropriate spacing.
`xmltv.exe tv_grab_na_dd --days 7 --output tvguide.xml`
4. From a command prompt in the XMLTV directory, run `update.bat` and watch for errors.
Rerun configuration above, if settings need to be changed/adjusted to match your listings.
This example provides 7 days of listings for Canada & US according to your channel selection.
5. Once your guide info has been created, copy the contents of this directory, including the `.xmltv` subdirectory to `C:\Program Files\Team MediaPortal\MediaPortal\xmltv` overwriting all files. In this directory, rename the `tvguide.bat` to `*.old`, and `update.bat` to `tvguide.bat`.
6. Delete the `TVDatabasev3.db` file from `C:\Program Files\Team XBMC\MediaPortal\database`
7. Start MediaPortal, goto to `My TV>Schedule` and be sure you can refresh the guide [F3].
The dialog will indicate a successful update, click OK to continue.

Thats it, you should now have a local and current TV listing for your area.

For more insight on to how to fine tune, or configure your Tv Guide Listings, read the documents provided with XMLTV and also check out this website for examples-
<http://www.showshifter.com/support/hmxmltv.html>

Now for the channel icons.....

In the `C:\Program Files\Team XBMC\MediaPortal\xmltv` directory are located the icons for the selected channels of your guide.

The icon files have the same naming convention as the TVGuide channels. ie. Channel: Nederland 3, associated icon: `nederland 3.png`, etc.

Open MediaPortal, My TV, and the selected channel icon will appear in the top left corner with appropriate details to the right, describing the selected channel.

Open the Schedule, and all assigned channels will display a thumbnail of the related icon.

Off course, XMLTV can also download the associated icons, using tag `<icon source>` with the right programming.

Keyboard Controls

General:

p	= play
F5	= fast backward
F6	= fast forward
space	= pause
F7	= play previous song/movie
F8	= play next song/movie
A	= select item
B	= Stop
U	= parent directory (..)
X	= switch between GUI & fullscreen
esc	= go back to previous window
enter	= select item
pageup	= previous page
pagedown	= next page
left/right	= left/right
up/down	= up/down

My TV:

TVGuide

left/right	= go left/right
y	= increase time interval
x	= decrease time interval
F1	= default time interval
home	= goto current time
A	= record
enter	= record
pageup	= goto next day
pagedown	= goto previous day
F3	= load new tvguide.xml

Recorded TV

O	= delete recording
---	--------------------

My Music:

Playlist:

Y	= remove selected item from playlist
F1	= show music window

Songs/Album/Artist/Genre/Top100:

F1	= show playlist window
F3	= lookup/show album information of song
Y	= add selected item to playlist

My Pictures:

During View picture/slideshow:

F1	= show picture info
right	= show next picture
left	= show previous picture
x	= zoom out
a	= zoom in
0-9	= zoom level 0-9
R	= rotate
space	= pause/continue slideshow

[in zoommode you can move around in the picture using the cursor keys]

My Movies:

Playlist:

Y	= remove selected item from playlist
F1	= show video window

Files/Actors/Genre/Year/Title

F1	= delete item (only in title mode)
F1	= goto video playlist (in all other modes)
Y	= add item to playlist

Fullscreen video:

General:

S	= Switch aspect ratio between Zoom/Stretched/Normal
A	= play
B	= stop
right	= step forward (+1%)
left	= step backward (-1%)
U	= small step back
up	= big step forward (+10%)
down	= big step backward (-10%)
Y	= show OSD

OSD:

pageup	= value +
pagedown	= value -
x	= close submenu
y	= close OSD
esc	= close submenu

DVD playback:

m	= menu
n	= next chapter
p	= previous chapter

Watching TV:

right	= next channel
left	= previous channel

Movie calibration:

A = next arrow
enter = next arrow
F1 = reset
use cursor keys to calibrate the arrow

UI calibration:

F1 = reset
use cursor keys to calibrate

Capture Cards Supported

A list of known devices that MediaPortal supports.

ATI:

ATI TV Wonder VE
ATI TV Wonder PCI

GeForce:

Hauppauge:

PVR250/350/USB2 with Hardware MPEG2 Encoder
PVR2 USB2 on USB port

MSI:

8606-40 TV Tuner [no FM Radio] in MSI Mega 180

nVidia:

Misc:

MediaPortal Requirements

At the very least all of the following must be installed, with the most current working version available.

1. MS Windows XP Home or Pro or Windows 2000
2. MS Service Pack 1a.
3. MS Windows MediaPlayer 9 for playing media files.
4. MS DirectX 9b

5. MS .Net Framework 1.1
6. Latest working Audio & Video drivers for your hardware.
7. Codecs to support your playback media.
8. Very latest build of MediaPortal.

Audio & Video Codecs

To properly view or listen to your media, and appropriate codec matching your source material has to be installed. Many are supplied with WindowsXP, but speciality files, may need a codec to be post installed. Check out some of the following websites for more info and application.

http://sourceforge.net/project/showfiles.php?group_id=53761

<http://btwincap.sourceforge.net/>

http://www.afterdawn.com/software/video_software/codecs_and_filters/

http://sourceforge.net/project/showfiles.php?group_id=82303&package_id=84804

<http://www.inmatrix.com/articles/mediasetup2.shtml>

Search & Destroy

Like to get dirty and mess up? Are you good at breaking things? Here is some tools that may help you to understand the innerworkings, and surface features of MediaPortal.

XML Viewer/Notepad - to view and edit the .xml control files

http://www.devhood.com/tools/tool_details.aspx?tool_id=261 or
<http://www.snapfiles.com/download/dlxmlviewer.html>

GraphEdit - to see the innerworkings of capture hardware WDM

<http://www.digital-digest.com/dvd/downloads/graphedit.html>

AMCap - Capture Card Diagnostics

<http://members.driverguide.com/driver/detail.php?driverid=7731>

SQLite Browser - to view the database files

<http://sqlitebrowser.sourceforge.net>

Or join the crew at <http://mediaportal.sourceforge.net> and contribute your skills in C# programming or bug testing.

Revisions to Manual

May 12/04 - MrMario64 - Logos, graphics, text arrangement, etc.

May 13/04 - LarryGB - [V1205] DVD new features & GUI Text/Graphics

May 13/04 - MrMario64 - MyVideos, various small changes, Settings