Palette Programming Tips and Tricks

Welcome to Palette Programming Tips and Tricks

#1 – April 2011

The goal of this bulletin is to share information about powerful features that may not be known or understood. PaletteOS is very powerful and has a long rich development history that has taken customer's comments to heart to address programmer's issues and requested features.

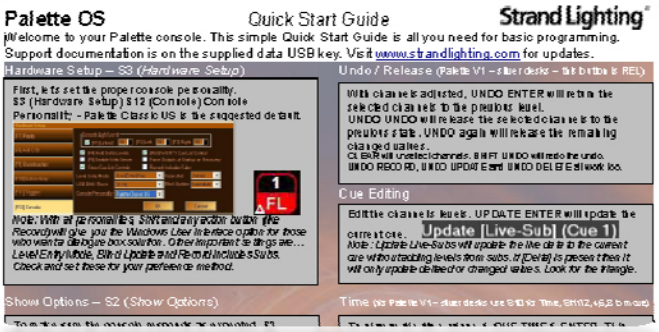
Seeing that this is the first of these bulletins, I wanted to start out at the beginning and share a few tips for getting started.

*Like many functions on any PaletteOS console, there is a Command Line solution and a Graphical User Interface solution for many of the functions that the console can perform. Any Command Line (**CL:**) solution will be presented in a red box, where a Graphical User Interface (**GUI:**) solution will be presented in a blue box.*

Quick Start Guide

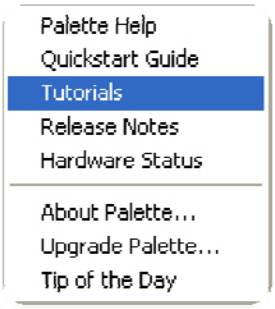
From the Help pulldown, select the *Quick Start Guide*, print it out (front and back) on one page and laminate. Then keep this at the console.

From console setup through basic programming functions and into simple effects, this will be the document that will get you up to speed for the vast majority of what a programmer needs to know to get up to speed on any PaletteOS console.



Tutorials

There are some basic tutorials in the help files. These go more in depth than the *Quick Start Guide* does and they hold a lot of data about how the PaletteOS works.



Channel Control

Like many functions on any PaletteOS console, there is a command line solution and a graphical solution for channel control. The following syntax will turn on channel 1 through 10 to 100%.

CL: [1] [THRU] [10] [FULL]

GUI: Use the pointer to click and drag a range of channels.
Roll the intelliwheel on the mouse to change the selected channels' levels.

The channel control tutorial covers all channel control solutions and is definitely worth the read.

Where to Store Data

Data can be stored as either Cues or Looks (Effects can be stored with either Cues or Looks). Cues would be the best thing to use for a scripted sequence like a play or a musical. This would be for productions that are following a script and go in the same order every night.

Looks are the content that are stored on submasters, groups and moving light palettes and subs are best used for productions that are not scripted and do not have a predetermined order. Things like assemblies, meetings and any other types of non-scripted or loosely scripted environment where you need to adjust the lighting on the fly.

Record vs Update

It is best to follow this rule of thumb - *Record to Create … Update to Edit*.

Record

If you are creating your first cue in a production, use channel control to set the levels as you want them, then type…

CL: [RECORD] [ENTER]

This will default to recording a cue and it will record cue 1 for you. All recording will auto-increment after that. (Cue 2…Cue 3 and so on). You can always override and record any cue number you wish by typing…

CL: [RECORD] [5] [ENTER]

This will record cue 5.

If you want to record a submaster, you can type…

CL: [RECORD] [LOOK] [1] [ENTER] Or **CL:** [RECORD] [BUMP]

The second option allows you to press RECORD and then the bump button under the submaster where you want the look stored. If you want this on submaster 1, then just press the bump button under the first submaster to complete the record command. Then UNDO UNDO to release all channels and you can now access the submaster's look by activating the slider.

Update

Adjust a few channels using your preferred channel control method from above and let's update cue 5 or the current cue.

CL: [UPDATE] [ENTER]

Update will always default to the current cue. This is the most common use of update although you are not limited to this. More on the advanced use of update in future bulletins.

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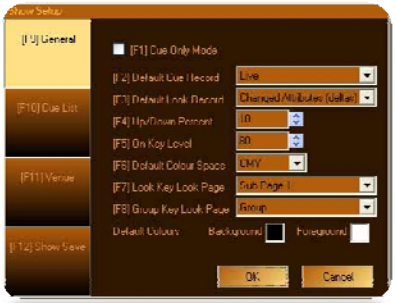
Live vs Delta

Record [Live-Sub] (Cue 25)

Record [Delta-Sub] (Cue 1)



Depending on how the console is setup, you'll notice that the recording/updating process will inform you of what the console is doing. It will likely either be recording/updating in Live or Delta. The default can be changed in (*S2-Show Options – General – Default Cue Record*). Storing information Live will snapshot the entire output of the desk (plus or minus levels from submasters – that's a different setting). This will insure that "what you see is what you get" and I find this a good way to start learning the console.

Storing information Delta will only store the channels that have a delta next to them (small triangle in the corner beside the channel's level.) These are channel's levels that have been "changed". So if you assign lights a level that's different from where they are currently, a delta will be applied to that channel.

I encourage you to go back to the Quick Start Guide and go over the *Hardware Setup* and *Show Options*. This will give you a good overview of the consoles settings and features to help you work the way you want.

Cue Only vs Tracking

Tracking

Cue Only

At the top of your screen it will always let you know if you are in *Tracking* mode or *Cue Only* mode. Tracking simple lets you know that any channel that you store into a cue will stay at that level until it's given another instruction in another cue. It's a very powerful way to edit multiple cues at the same time. Say you need to add a wall sconce or a chandelier into a scene. Just update the new channel into the first cue of the scene "to track". Then take the new channel out in the cue that ends the scene and update.

Tracking is a very powerful feature and can save you lots of programming time but only if you understand it. I welcome you to read up about it in the Basic Recording Tutorial that's on the console under the Help menu to better understand this feature.

I recommend that you set the default (in Show Options) to be in the mode that you will record / update the majority of the time. If you think in tracking or in cue only mode then set that as your default. When you press RECORD or UPDATE there is always a softkey (S11) that will allow you to record or update in the other mode.

Improvements

If you have any comments, suggestions or requests, feel free to email our controls division at bobby.harrell@philips.com. We'll always listen.

Real World Stories

Please send us your stories. If you have a production where you found a tip or trick that you used or just want to tell us of your experiences, please send photos along with your stories. We would love to include your story in our next Palette Tips and Tricks bulletin.

HA – Breath of Life

I'll leave you with a production photo and screen shot from the PaletteOS from "Ha – The Breath of Life" at the Polynesian Cultural Center in Hawaii.

Lighting Designer: Brent Pritchett
House Electrician: George Pasi

Photo Credit: Polynesian Cultural Center

Happy Programming!
Strand Lighting Controls Division