Palette Programming Tips and Tricks

PHILIPS
Strand Lighting

Welcome to Palette Programming Tips and Tricks

#7 - October 2011

The goal of these bulletins is to share information about powerful features within the Palette and LightPalette console lines. PaletteOS, the software that runs on all Palette consoles, 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.

This seventh bulletin will discuss Cue Timing. It may seem simple but there is a lot of power and flexibility in cues, the way they work and the options that are available for time.

*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.*

Cue Time

Cue Time allows you to determine the rate of the crossfade from one lighting state to another. Cues are the preferred method of changing from one lighting state to another when in a scripted environment for the following reasons…

- Pressing GO will crossfade from one lighting state to another using preprogrammed time fades allowing for complex timing transitions with the press of a single button.
- This gives you repeatability of crossfades for every performance.
- Always follows a numerical sequence.
- Allows one person to program the show and a different operator to run the show and still get the same results night after night.

Programming and setup time is longer with cues but once they are complete, their repeatability is consistent, predictable and exact.

To the right is an example of a cue list. The Cue Time column has the time of the entire fade. This fade includes levels going up; levels going down and attribute movement. Basically, every change that happens in that cue will fade or move in the cue's time.

Cue	Label	Cue Time	Down Time	Action
28.3	Dancers DS	4		
28.5	Dancers Spread CS	3		
29	Solo Drummer	5		
30	with Music	5		
30.5	With Drums	5		
30.7	Family on stairs	5		
30.8	End bump	0		F:1
30.9	Asle Lights for Hut Buil...	3		
31	Stick Dancers DS	5		
31.5	with Singing	5		
32	Presentation of House	7		
32.2	Presentation of Fihu	5		
32.3	after Presentation	7		
32.5	5 Girls Dance	5		
32.7	Cloth off stage	10		

PHILIPS
Strand Lighting

Adjusting Cue Time – Command Line

Cue Time can be adjusted in a number of ways…

The Traditional Method

CL: [CUE] [1] [TIME] [5] [ENTER]

This is probably the most common and traditional way to adjust cue time on most any lighting desk.

However, there are some shortcuts and additional ways to do this.

Current Cue

CL: [CUE] [TIME] [5] [ENTER]

With the exclusion of a cue number, this will change time on the current cue. This may seem a simple thing but saving keystrokes means not only saving time but eliminating the possibility of keystroke errors.

Delay/Fade

CL: [CUE] [TIME] [3/5] [ENTER]

With a cue time of 3/5, the cue will delay 3 seconds prior to starting a fade of 5 seconds. This is different than many desks so don't be confused with other consoles that do up/down time.

Down Time

CL: [CUE] [TIME] [TIME] [10] [ENTER]

When the TIME button is pressed twice, it changes from CUE TIME to DOWN TIME. The example above will change the down time to 10. Now all channels that are going to a lower level in the cue will fade in a 10 count. This will not affect channels going up or attributes.

Note: There is also a separate Down Time column. When looking for a graphical solution for Down Time, just edit the data in the Down Time column on the relevant cue as you would the Cue Time.

Position Time

CL: [CUE] [TIME] [TIME] [TIME] [7.5] [ENTER]

If you have moving lights in your showfile, pressing TIME again will allow you to change POSITION TIME so that all pan/tilt movement that is stored in the cue will now abide by the time set here.

Attribute Family Timing

If you continue to press the TIME key, it will continue to cycle to all cue timing options in this order. CUE TIME, DOWN TIME, POSITION TIME, COLOR TIME, GOBO TIME and LENS TIME.

These attribute timing options are very powerful and easy to use. They allow for more complex visual transition. Just think about having the cue's levels fade in 3 seconds while all moving light positions move in 5 seconds (Position Time 5), have the color wait until the movement is finished and change color in 3 seconds (Color Time 5/3), have the gobos snap immediately (Gobo Time 0) and have the zoom and edge wait until position and color have finished and then slowly fade in 10 seconds (Lens Time 8/10). Very powerful. Very Palette.

Multiple Cues

CL: [CUE] [2] [THRU] [4] [TIME] [12] [ENTER]

There's nothing that says you have to change time one cue at a time. Change multiple cues with a single command simply and easily.

Adjusting Cue Time – Graphically

One of the most user-friendly options that the PaletteOS gives you is the ability to edit the cue list sheet graphically.

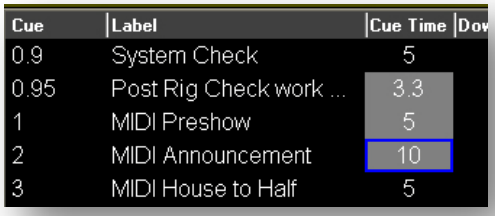
If you want to change the time of a cue, just click on the appropriate "cell." This would be the union of the correct Cue's row and the Cue Time column. Much like an Excel spreadsheet.

From here, you can click again, type in the new time and press ENTER. Done.

If you need to update multiple cues with the same time, just use the mouse to "click and drag" to grab time cells for multiple cues and change them all at the same time. Very intuitive.

Once the cell or multiple cells is selected and the number is highlighted in blue, you can use the level wheel or the mouse wheel to adjust the time up or down in 1 second increments. If you hold down the Shift key while doing this, the Time value will adjust in 1/10th of a second increments.

This works on any timing column so apply the same process to changing Down Time or any Attribute Family timing as you would edit the Cue Time information.

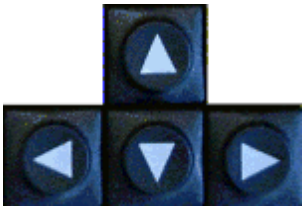


Relative Adjustment of Cue Time

One of the most powerful features that is often overlooked is the ability to adjust timing of multiple cues collectively even when they have different times.

Let's look at the following example. Cues 0.95, 1 and 2 all need to be adjusted by the same amount but they all have different times. They all need to have 1 second added to each cue's time. Click and drag to select all 3 cues' Cue Time cells as the image shows. Then click on the blue box again to go into the edit mode. When in edit mode, just roll the mouse wheel or level wheel up one tick (remember that the hardware is indented to allow for that. Once done, click outside of the Cue Time box to close out of editing mode and you'll see that cue 0.95 now has a time of 4.3 seconds, cue 1 a time of 6 seconds and cue 2 a time of 11 seconds. If you had needed to adjust these by 1/10th of a second, you can just hold down the shift key prior to rolling the mouse wheel and that will adjust the value by 1/10th of a second per indented tick.

Adjusting Cue Time – Arrow Keys



To get the benefit of the graphical solution without the need to move your hands from the keys to grab the mouse, you can use the arrow keys to accomplish the same thing. Just move the blue box up, down, left or right accordingly, press EDIT, insert the new time value and press ENTER.

To grab multiple cues' time cell, just press SHIFT and UP / DOWN prior to pressing EDIT.

Also remember the ability to use the mouse wheel or level wheel to adjust the time value up or down.

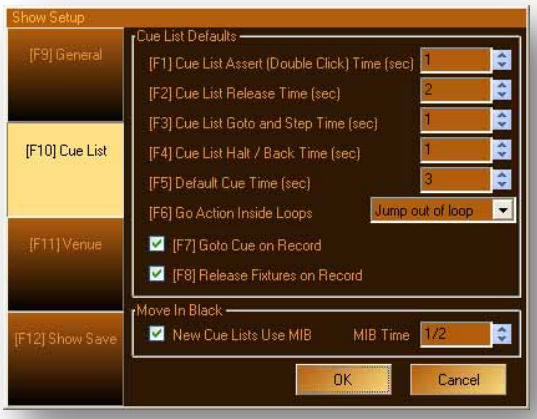
Adjusting Cue Time – Softkeys

For those with touchscreens or who just like the softkey approach, once you press CUE there is a time softkey. S10-Time. When that is selected, all upper or green softkeys allow you all of unique time options. Notice that not only cue time, down time and attribute family timing are available but also Follow Time and the ability to Clear Independent Timing.

Note: Independent Timing is a very powerful feature and will be featured in a separate PaletteOS Tips and Tricks bulletin.

Default Times

Default times for the showfile can be found in the Show Options dialogue box. Press *S2-Show Options* and then *S10-Cue List*. Not only can the default time be set for any new cue that is created but also how fast cues operate when you are using functions like GOTO, STOP/BACK, STEP BACK and STEP FORWARD.



Cue List Default Times

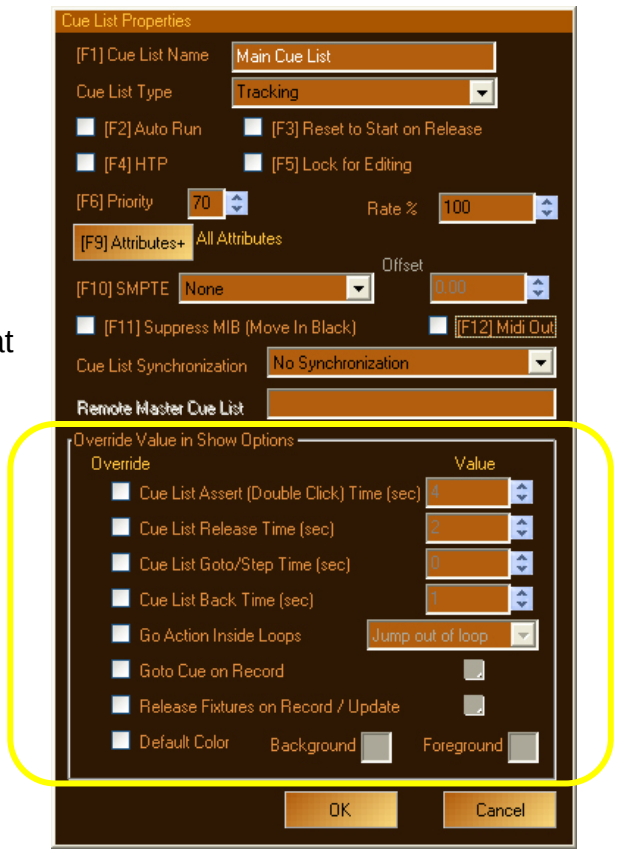
In addition to the default times for the showfile, did you know you can override these settings with defaults per cue list?

Just highlight any cue list, right click and select Properties. Once there, a cue list dialogue box will appear with all of the options and properties for that cue list.

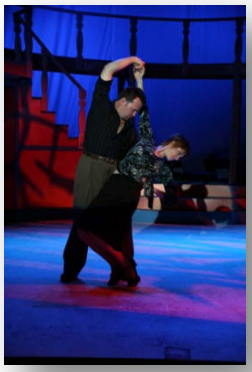
Any settings here will override the Cue List defaults for the showfile that were set in Show Options.

This is nice if you are you creating a cue list of cues to be used as an effect and you want all cues in this cue list to have a default time of .5 seconds but any cue that you create in the Main Cue List, may want to have a default time of 3 seconds.

It's all about shortcuts and any shortcut that can be used to reduce your programming time is a good shortcut!



Dirty Rotten Scoundrels – Pollard Theatre of Guthrie, Oklahoma



The Pollard Theatre, a professional resident theatre company in Guthrie, Oklahoma, just celebrated its 25th anniversary. Like many small companies, they have limited resources for their productions. The house equipment includes a Strand 500 series console and 60 CD80 dimmers. However, Don Childs, the Lighting Designer for this show, needed the additional flexibility and features that both automated luminaires and the PaletteOS would bring to the production.

Don said of this production, "*The show ran for a month and the PaletteOS was flawless. Without it, the Pollard could not have afforded the non-conventional fixtures or the control.*"

Equipment List

1 – Windows laptop running Philips Strand PaletteOS software
60 – Philips Strand CD80 dimmers
2 – Philips Vari*Lite 3500 Spot Units
2 – Philips Vari*Lite 3000 Wash Units
4 – Philips Vari*Lite 500 Wash Units
12 – Philips Color Kinetics ColorBlast 12 Units
12 – Wybron Scrollers
65 – Conventional Fixtures

Congratulations to Don Childs and the Pollard Theatre for a successful production and the theatre for reaching their 25th anniversary.

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.

Send to bobby.harrell@philips.com