

Boris XML Transfer 3

BORIS FX

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Product Documentation and Release Notes - May 25, 2011

Contents

- Product Description
- What's New with this Version
- System / Host Requirements
- Key Features
- Installation Procedure
- Registration, Evaluation Period, Purchasing and Licensing Instructions
- Removing the Software
- Support Contact Information
- Using the Product - Basic Steps - Export and Import
- User Interface / Import Options
- Feature Support
- Known Issues, Caveats and Limitations

Product Description

Boris XML Transfer 3 is a new update to the highly successful XML Transfer 2 workflow product, which enables the transfer of program sequences between Apple Final Cut Pro and Avid Media Composer into Adobe After Effects.

This new version of the software expands on the previous version by enabling the transfer of program sequences that were generated in Avid Media Composer, as well as Apple Final Cut Pro, into Adobe After Effects.

The product exists as an import plug-in inside Adobe After Effects, which translates the exported program sequence from Final Cut Pro or Avid. When imported into After Effects, the edit program sequence appears as an After Effects composition, with all of the edits, cuts, dissolves and treatments intact. It even transfers static or keyframed Boris Continuum Complete (BCC) plug-in filter effects that have been applied to clips in the timeline.

Easy to use and peerless in its level of feature support and options, we're certain that you'll enjoy the rewards of adding the XML Transfer 3 solution to your editing, compositing and finishing workflow.

What's New with this Version

New With Version 3.0.1 – May 25, 2011

Fixed bugs

- Fixed issue where only the first 4 characters of live text elements were being transferred. Text elements now transfer as expected, with all of the characters.
- Fixed issue where only the first two characters of text in a marker were being transferred. All of the text is now transferred with the marker.
- Fixed issue where the sequence start timecode of 23.98 frame rate was being interpreted incorrectly.
- Fixed issue where the duration of offline still images was being interpreted incorrectly.
- Fixed issue where an error message was appearing upon import into AE of time remapped sequences that included markers, which had become offset past the end of the last frame.

New With Version 3 – May 16, 2011

XML 3 extends the capabilities of the Boris XML 2 product by enabling the transfer of program sequences from Avid into After Effects. Previous versions of the XML Transfer software were limited to the import of program sequences from Final Cut Pro into After Effects.

System / Host Requirements

Macintosh

Hardware:

Intel based Apple Macintosh computer

Minimum 1GB of RAM (2+ recommended)
100 MB free disk space for XML 3 application

Software:

Mac OS 10.5.8 or later

Apple Final Cut Pro 6 or later
Avid Media Composer 5 or later
Adobe After Effects CS4 or later

Key Features

- Transfer of timeline sequences from Avid Media Composer
- Transfer of timeline sequences from Apple Final Cut Pro
- Integrity of transferred media elements is preserved during the transfer, including alpha channel information and masks
- Titles and text elements remain editable after the transfer to After Effects
- Optionally import or ignore audio tracks
- Optionally precompose all video and / or audio tracks during import
- All basic timeline edits, such as cuts, dissolves, etc are preserved intact
- Keyframe data applied to media elements and BCC filter effects is preserved and matched in After Effects

To view an up to date and comprehensive listing of supported features, please visit the XML Transfer product page on our web site at www.borisfx.com

Installation Procedure

The product installation procedure is quite simple and takes less than a minute to complete. You must restart After Effects after the product installation to use the XML Transfer software.

Double click the installer to start the installation process ... there are a total of 7 screens to click through:

Screen 1. Introduction: simply click the Continue button

Screen 2. License: Read the Software License Agreement and if you agree to the terms, click the Continue button, then click the Agree button

Screen 3. Registration: enter your name and the trial license that was sent to you via email after you downloaded the software installer and click Continue

Screen 4. Destination Select: select the target drive and click Continue

Screen 5. Installation Type: select the host system(s) into which you want to install the import filter and click Continue. You are then given the option to change the Install Location. You can elect to do that or ignore this and click Install to start the product installation.

Screen 6. Installation: The installer program will automatically click through this once it has completed installing the software

Screen 7. Summary: Tells you if the installation was successful. If so, click on the Close button to finish

Restart After Effects and you are ready to begin using XML Transfer 3 to import sequences from Final Cut Pro and Avid directly into After Effects.

Registration, Evaluation Period, Purchasing and Licensing Instructions

Product Registration

We strongly encourage all users to register their software. Doing so entitles you to 1 year of free technical support. To register your product, visit us at borisfx.com/support/register

Evaluation Period

The XML Transfer software will automatically run in trial mode for 15 days post the initial product installation. Trial periods are non-renewable, once they expire you must purchase and enter a license to continue working with the product.

Purchasing Instructions

Step 1. In After Effects, select File>Import>Avid AAF via Boris XML Transfer or Final Cut XML via Boris XML Transfer

Step 2. Click on the Unlock button at the lower portion of the file browser window - this opens the Unlock window

Step 3. Click on the Copy button in the Unlock window to copy the Unique ID for this computer

Step 4. Click on the purchase button in the Unlock window - this launches a web browser and brings you to the purchase page

Step 5. Select the product that you want and click on the Buy Now button - this brings you to the next window

Step 6. Paste the Unique ID that you copied in Step 3 into the Product ID box

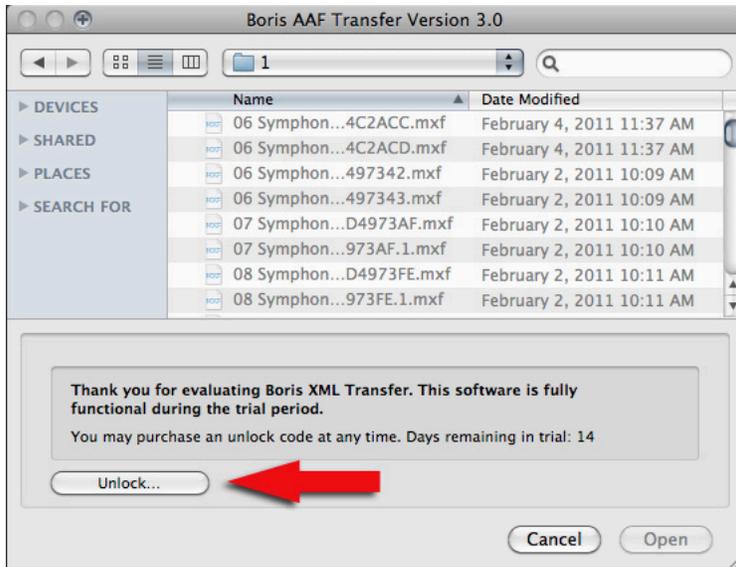
Step 7. Click on the Add to Cart button to go to the Checkout page

Step 8. On the Checkout page you enter your purchasing information, credit card details etc. The license for the product that you are purchasing is sent automatically to the email address that you provide on this page.

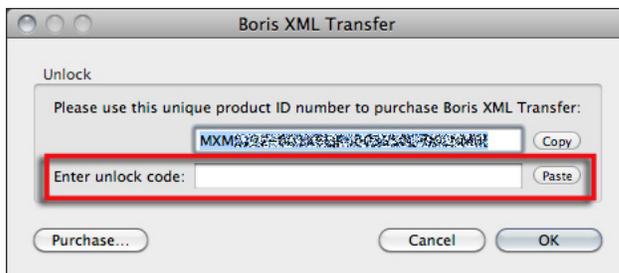
Licensing Instructions

Step 1. In After Effects, select File>Import>Avid AAF via Boris XML Transfer or Final Cut XML via Boris XML Transfer

Step 2. Click on the Unlock button at the lower portion of the file browser window - this opens the Unlock window



Step 3. Enter the license that you received via email into the Enter Unlock Code box, which is below the Unique ID box.



Removing the Software

Thank you for trying this product. If however, after trying the software you decide for whatever reason that the product is not going to be used on the target system, it can easily and safely be removed by using the XML Transfer Uninstaller. Follow these instructions to uninstall:

Step 1. Go to Applications/Boris XML Transfer. You should see a tool labeled "Uninstall XML Transfer"

Step 2. Double-click on the Uninstall XML Transfer tool.

Step 3. Click on the button labeled "Begin Uninstall of Boris XML Transfer." The process only takes a few seconds - once it has finished you may click on the Quit button to exit the uninstaller application.

Support Contact Information

If you encounter problems with use of this software, please contact one of our technical support representatives via email at support@borisfx.com or via the web at www.borisfx.com/support

Registered users of the product are entitled to 1 year of free technical support.

You can also access the Boris FX forum at the Creative Cow www.creativecow.net/borisfx where you can search the on-line knowledge base or pose a question.

Using the Product - Basic Steps - Export and Import

Here are the 3 basic steps for transferring a sequence from Avid or Final Cut into After Effects:

Step 1. In either Avid or Final Cut, select the sequence that you wish to transfer and export that as an AAF file (if you are exporting from Avid) or an XML file (if you are exporting from Final Cut)

Step 2. In After Effects, select the appropriate option for your exported sequence:

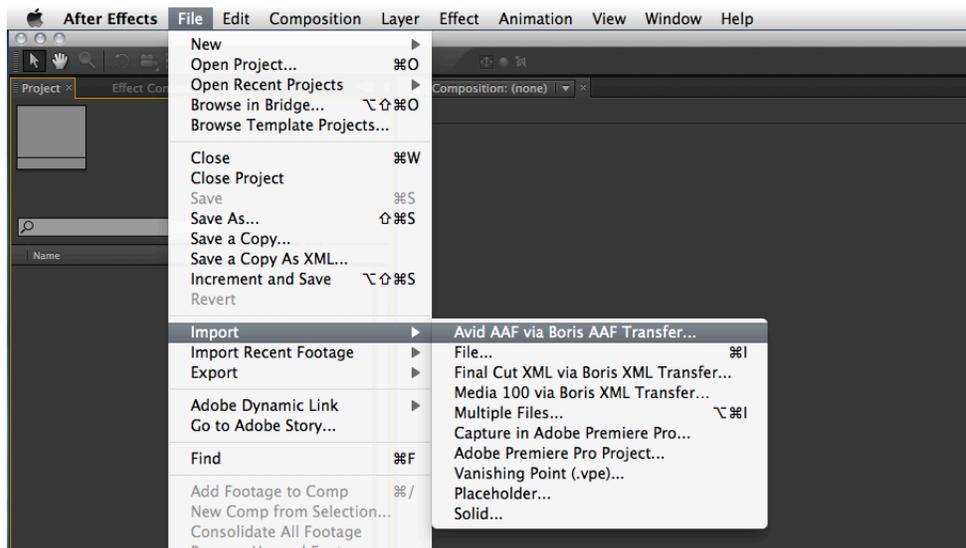
Avid

File>Import>Avid AAF via Boris AAF transfer

or

Final Cut Pro

File>Import>Final Cut XML via Boris XML Transfer



Step 3. A window appears automatically with import options for the sequence. Select the import options that you want to apply to the imported sequence in the Import Options window and click on the OK button to start the import.

The sequence will then be imported into the After Effects Project Window and will appear as a folder. Inside the folder, you will find all of the media files that are related to the imported sequence and an After Effects composition. Double click the composition to open it and begin working with the exported sequence.

User Interface / Import Options

You can control many aspects of the imported sequence during the import process. When you select a file to import into After Effects, a tabbed dialogue box / control panel appears with options and settings that will, most importantly, determine how the media and sequence will appear after import.

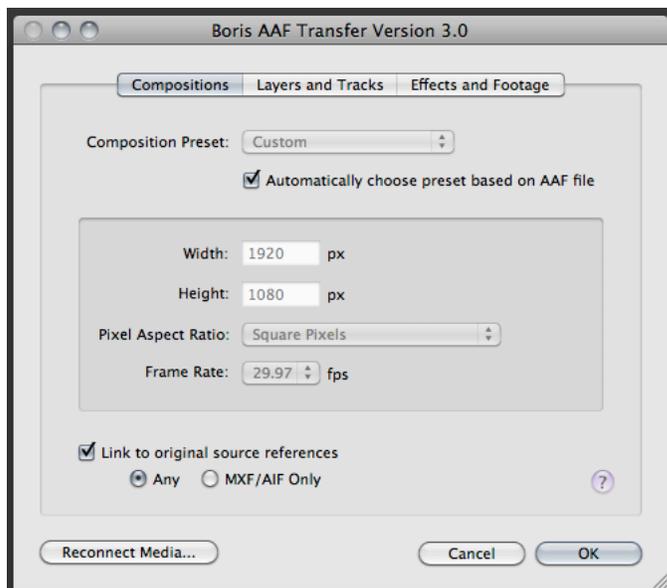
In XML 3, the import options box includes 3 panels, which are labeled Compositions, Layers and Tracks, Effects and Footage.

Compositions - The controls in this group are used to set the project dimensions, pixel aspect ratio and frame rate for the imported program sequence.

Layers and Tracks - This group contains controls that affect the raw media and video tracks that are used in the imported program sequence.

Effects and Footage - The controls in this group are related to the handling of any special effects filters or transitions as well as field / frame interpretation of media clips and sequences.

Compositions Panel:



Composition Preset

By default, XML Transfer will automatically match the project size, pixel aspect ratio and frame rate of the After Effects composition to that of the sequence that is being imported. You can override this by deselecting the checkbox "Automatically choose preset based on AAF file" which unlocks all of the custom settings options.

When you do this, you can select a preset from the Composition Preset list or you can manually enter the composition size using the Width and Height numeric entry fields.

You can also manually set the Pixel Aspect Ratio and the Frame Rate. Both are set by clicking on the respective pop-ups and selecting the desired option from the list that appears.

Link to original source references

There is also a checkbox option in the lower portion of this panel to determine whether your imported sequence will include only links to the original MXF/AIF media files, or links to any file type, such as Quicktime. This option is also enabled by default and is set to include files of "Any" type. It's important to understand how this function works:

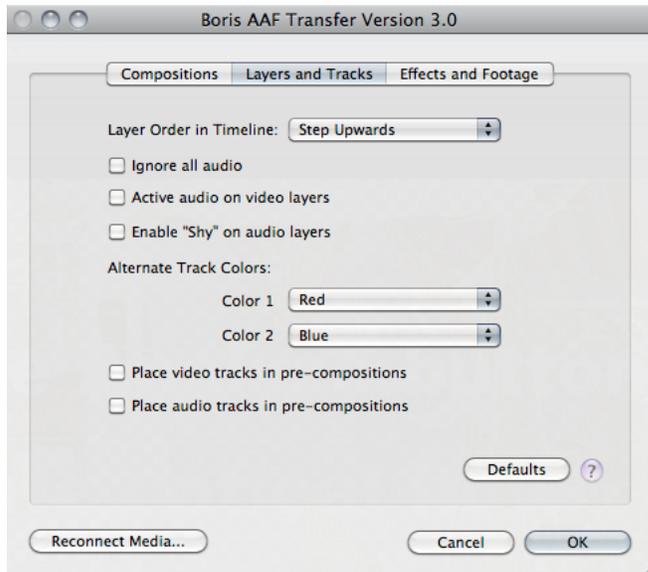
- If the Link to Original Source References box is unchecked, no media files will be imported and all media references will appear as missing files when the sequence composition is opened in After Effects.
- If the Link to Original Source References box is checked and "Any" is selected, then all media files will be imported
- If the Link to Original Source References box is checked and "MXF/AIF Only" is selected, then only media files of this type will be imported

Reconnect Media...

Once you have selected the desired media import option, you must click on the Reconnect Media button, which is located at the bottom left corner of this panel. This action will open the Reconnect Media window, which lists all of the media and their relative paths that have been used in the sequence that you are importing. There are two areas where files are listed in this window - the list at the top displays all files that are currently Offline - files in the Offline list are displayed in red text while the list at the bottom displays media elements that are Online - files in the Online list are displayed in black text.

To bring Offline files Online, select one of the red files and click on the Locate Files button. A browser window will then appear, which you must use to manually select the folder that contains the selected media element. You need only select one of the files in the folder and then click on the open button - the remaining media files in this folder will be automatically selected by the software and you will be returned to the Reconnect Media window. Once you have brought all of the files that you need Online, you can click the OK button to return back to the main Compositions panel.

Layers and Tracks Panel:



Layer Order in Timeline

After Effects provides users with an option to set the vertical ordering of layers in the composition's clip stack, meaning that clips can be layered either from top to bottom or from bottom to top across the timeline. The "Layer Order in Timeline" pop-up selector is used to set the vertical stacking order of imported clips in the After Effects timeline either from top to bottom or bottom to top. Step Upwards - Left to Right in the sequence timeline translates to a Bottom to Top upward stacking order in the AE timeline, which means that earlier clips appear at the bottom of the After Effects layer stack. Step Downwards - Left to Right in the sequence timeline translates to a Top to Bottom downward stacking order in the After Effects timeline, which means that earlier clips appear at the top of the layer stack.

Ignore all Audio

If enabled, this option will prevent the import of audio tracks. When disabled, audio tracks are imported along with other media elements.

Active audio on video layers

Video and audio tracks are naturally split and placed into independent groups in editing applications regardless of whether the source file contained consolidated video and audio. This is not the case in After Effects, which keeps consolidated video and audio together in a single video/audio track. Enabling this option will consolidate linked video and audio tracks.

Enable "Shy" on audio layers

In After Effects, there is a feature called "Shy" that can be used to hide select layers in the timeline. This feature is generally used to create more room vertically in a deep composition by preventing "shy" layers from showing up. Shy layers will still render, regardless of the state of this switch. Enabling this checkbox option automatically sets this switch for audio layers in After Effects.

Alternate Track Colors

This option enables you to set a separate color code in After Effects for transferred clips that originated on different tracks in Final Cut or Avid. For instance, if you have clips that are staggered across V1 and V2 in the edit program sequence, when you use Boris XML Transfer to open the project in After Effects, clips that were placed on V1 will take on the color from the Color 1 setting and clips that were placed on V2 will take on the color from the Color 2 setting, making it easier for you to differentiate between the different video tracks from the program sequence in After Effects.

Place video tracks in pre-compositions

Selecting this option will pre-compose all video tracks so that they appear in two consolidated tracks in the composition. You can access the non pre-composed layered video tracks by double-clicking the pre-composition track in the timeline.

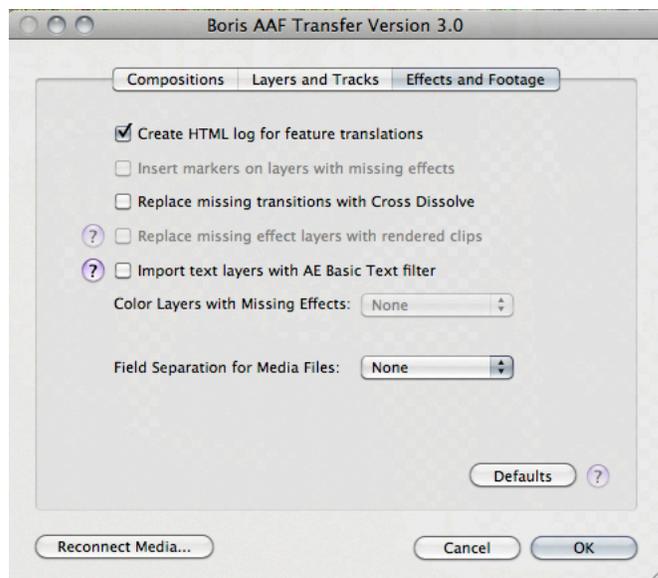
Place audio tracks in pre-compositions

Selecting this option will pre-compose all audio tracks so that they appear in two consolidated tracks in the composition. You can access the non pre-composed layered audio tracks by double-clicking the pre-composition track in the timeline.

Defaults

Clicking this button will return all options on this panel to their factory defaults

Effects and Footage Panel:



Create HTML log for feature translations

Avid only. When this feature is selected, the XML Transfer software will automatically generate an HTML log file that provides a feature map that lists each filter that was used on each clip in Avid and the corresponding filter that was applied in After Effects. In cases where there is no current filter or feature match, the log file will list this as not supported and highlight the clip description in red.

Insert markers on layers with missing effects

Currently only available for Final Cut Pro program sequences - Avid support for this feature to be made available shortly. This option, when enabled, will add a clip marker to the After Effects composition timeline whenever the composition contains layers that have missing effects.

Replace missing transitions with Cross Dissolve

If a transition effect was used for which there is no close visual match, you can use this option to have the software automatically generate a simple cross dissolve in place of the missing transition effect.

Replace missing effect layers with rendered clips

Currently only available for Final Cut Pro program sequences - Avid support for this feature to be made available shortly. Enabling this option will force the software to use the Final Cut sequence render files instead of the original source media clips for all cuts in the timeline composition.

Import text layers with AE basic text filter

This option maps text and title effects to the older After Effects Basic Text filter instead of the new more fully featured text generator. Note that because live text objects in Final Cut, Avid and After Effects are not the same thing, it's not possible for XML Transfer to handle text in such a way as to provide an exact match across the applications. The text itself will transfer correctly, but style information will not, therefore you must manually reapply any styles to the text in After Effects to match the style that was used in Final Cut or Avid.

Color layers with Missing Effects

Currently only available for Final Cut Pro program sequences - Avid support for this feature to be made available shortly. In cases where it was not possible for the software to create a feature or effect match for a clip, this option will label that clip with the selected color of your choice to isolate the clip and make it easy to identify in the After Effects timeline.

Field Separation for Media Files

Use this pop-up to automatically reinterpret the field ordering of imported media elements. The setting that is selected here will be applied to all imported media elements, regardless of the field separation setting in the original media file.

Feature Support

For a comprehensive and up to date listing of supported features, please visit the XML Transfer product page on our web site at www.borisfx.com.

Known Issues, Caveats and Limitations

Herewith is a list of known issues, feature limitations and caveats with the current version of XML Transfer 3 software. We hope to have many of the issues on this list solved and fixed with forthcoming revisions of the product.

- Freeze Frames

Freeze frames have a 15 second, 9 frame maximum duration

- FEC filters

FEC filter effects are currently only supported when transferring sequences between Final Cut and After Effects and are not transferred with sequences from Avid.

- BCC Swish Pan

The pan direction is reversed in After Effects when the Step Upward option is selected in the Import Control Panel.

- BCC Optical Stabilizer

Image Analysis data is not transferred with the Optical Stabilizer filter, however the filter is applied to the transferred clip. Click the filters Analyze button in the After Effects Control Panel to stabilize the clip.

- BCC Motion Tracker

BCC motion tracker data is not preserved during the timeline transfer and image clips must be re-tracked in After Effects.

- HTML Log file

The HTML feature match log file that is optionally generated during the transfer misstates that BCC effects are not supported. You can still use the log file to see which filters were or were not transferred by ignoring the supported column and instead using the color coding - items that are listed in black text are supported, items in red text are not.

- Note about Keyframes

Keyframes are supported for every element or feature that can vary over time, as long as the After Effects equivalent can also vary over time. There are a few cases in which a keyframe-able item in Final Cut is not keyframe-able in After Effects - these keyframes will not be translated. Also, because there are differences in the bezier keyframe interpolation methods used in Final Cut and After Effects, if the sequence that you export from Final Cut has instances of bezier interpolation for any of the keyframes in the timeline, then these may be a slight difference in the transferred result in After Effects. Tweaking the bezier curves in After Effects can eliminate these slight differences.

- Note about "3rd Party" Filter Effects

3rd party filters must be installed in Final Cut / Avid and After Effects for the filter effect to transfer from Final Cut or Avid to After Effects. If a 3rd party filter effect is not installed in Final Cut / Avid and After Effects, the effect will be ignored in the transferred sequence.

- Note about Final Cut Pro Time Remapping

Because of the nature of the difference between time remapping effects in Final Cut and After Effects, this version of Boris XML Transfer will map Final Cut Time Remap keyframes to the After Effects Timewarp effect. Duration stretching of the remapped clip will only be preserved from Final Cut to After Effects if the Speed parameter is constant (i.e. no keyframes). In this case, the clip layer's Stretch value is modified to reflect the Final Cut Speed instead of applying the Timewarp effect.