

Introduction

Skylla Producer is a Windows application that enables you to import, manage and delete audio content in the Skylla inventory.

This chapter provides an overview of Skylla Producer. Subsequent chapters will explain in more detail how to use Skylla Producer in your day-to-day operation.

Overview

Skylla Producer provides four main *views* to organize your daily workflow:

- *List View* (page X): List View presents the contents of the Skylla inventory in a scrollable list. Powerful search functions allow you to easily find a particular item. Using list view, you can audition an item, change the properties of an item or delete it entirely from the Skylla inventory.
- *Import View* (page X): In import view, you can easily add existing items to the Skylla inventory. Use Import View when you wish to add audio items that were downloaded from FTP or web sites, ripped from CD, received via e-mail or created in an external audio application.
- *Record View* (page X): Record view is useful when you need to quickly record audio using the computer's line input connections.
- *Voice Track View* (page X): Voice Track view allows you to quickly and efficiently record talkover segments, maintaining the sound and pacing of a live radio show. The timing of each event can be modified easily by using the mouse to 'slide' each element in relationship to the others.

Organization

Skylla Producer can be used to manage the inventory of one or more stations. Each station's inventory can be viewed separately, or the inventory of all stations can be viewed simultaneously.

Audio items can be further grouped into *categories* under each station. Eight categories are pre-defined for you:

- Commercials
- Jingles
- Liners
- Music
- News
- Promos
- PSAs
- Voice Tracks

If you wish, you may define additional categories.

Carts and Cuts

Longtime broadcasters hearing the word *cart* will recall the endless-loop tape cartridges used for decades to store audio for quick playback. Skylla Producer uses the word “cart” to refer to a collection of one or more audio items (or *cuts*) to be played by Skylla.

When a new audio cut is added to the Skylla inventory (in either Record or Import views), you must assign it a *cart number*. This is the number that your music-scheduling or traffic-and-billing software uses to refer to this collection of audio cuts.

Like its tape-based namesake, a Skylla cart can contain one or more audio cuts. When a cart is played, only one of the audio cuts is played. Subsequent plays cycle through each cut in the cart. In this way, it is possible to rotate several (up to 99) audio cuts under a single cart number.

Each cut in a cart has several unique properties, including ranges of dates when an individual cut is valid for play. When Skylla calls upon a cart to play, only the cut(s) that are valid for that particular date and time are considered for play. By assigning different date and time ranges for each cut in a cart, it is possible to let Skylla handle copy changes for you.

Consider this example: the local theater chain has ordered commercials advertising the Next Summer Blockbuster. Four commercials are provided, differing only in their endings:

Cut 1, to air the first through the third: “Starts Friday at a theater near you. Check papers for show times.”

Cut 2, to air on the fourth: “Starts tomorrow at a theater near you...”

Cut 3, to air on the fifth: “Starts today at a theater near you...”

Cut 4, to air on the sixth onwards: “Now showing at a theater near you...”

By adjusting the date ranges for the four cuts, it is possible to have Skylla play only cut 1 on the first through the third of the month, only cut 2 on the fourth, cut three on the fifth, and so on.

Valid Audio Formats

Skylla Producer is compatible with most major digital audio formats, including:

Apt-X compressed audio play and record

BWF (broadcast Wave) playback only

MPEG2 (MPEG version 1 layer 2) playback only

MPEG3 (MPEG version 1 layer 3) record and playback

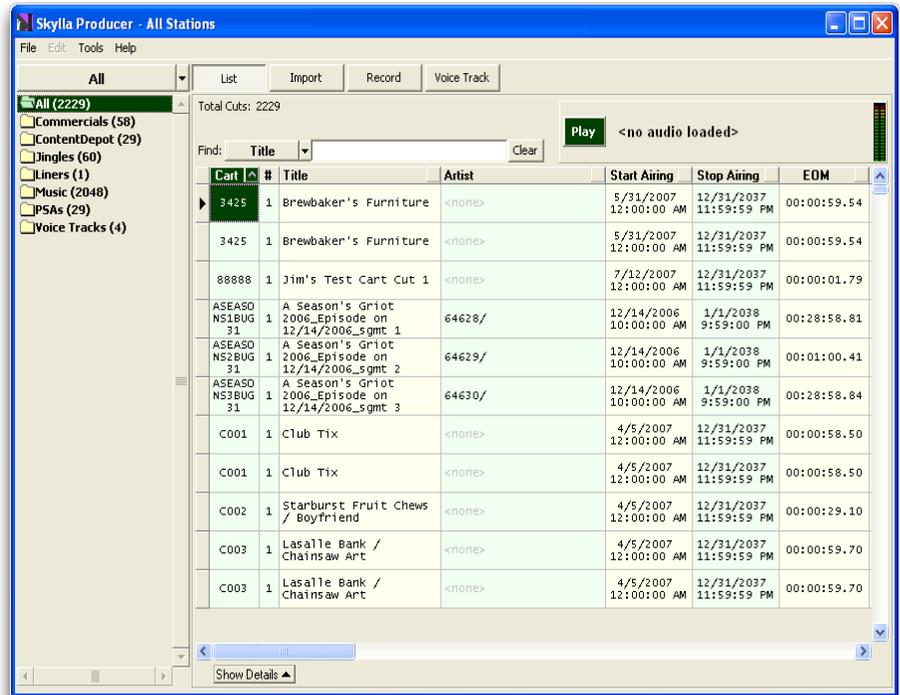
Microsoft WAV (PCM Linear audio) record and playback

Please note that Apt-X record and playback requires an optional plug-in, available from Smarts Broadcast Systems. Contact your sales specialist for more information.

Skylla Producer Workspace

When Skylla Producer is launched, it opens in List View, similar to the illustration below:

Figure 1
Skylla Producer
in List View



The leftmost column is the *Navigation Pane*. The navigation pane allows you to select a particular station and category to view. To the right of the Navigation Pane is the *List Pane*. Cuts for the selected station and category are displayed in the list pane.

- To select a *Station*, click the dropdown box at the top of the Navigation Pane. You may choose a station from the dropdown, or select *All* (as shown here) to view the selected category for all stations simultaneously.
- To select a *Category*, click one of the folders in the Navigation Pane.
- Change the sort order of cuts in the List Pane by clicking one of the column headings.
- To select a cut, double-click anywhere on its line in the list pane.
- Use the *Find* feature to quickly locate a cut. Use the dropdown box to select search criteria, and enter all or part of the desired information to locate cuts. Matching cuts are quickly displayed.
- To see even more information for a selected cut, click the *Show Details* button at the bottom of the list pane. When you are done, click it again to hide the details box.

Context Menu

In List View, right click a cut to see a helpful context menu.

Figure 2: List View's Context Menu



Use *Load and Play* to audition a cut in the Quick-Player.

Click *Re-Record* to open a cut in Record View and replace its audio.

Edit Info allows you to modify the properties for a given cut.

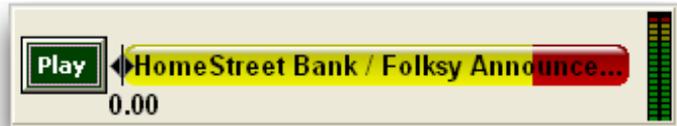
Edit Audio opens the selected cut in an external audio editor.

Export makes a copy of the selected cut. Use Export when you wish to burn an existing cut to CD or send it as an e-mail attachment.

Quick Player

Located above the list pane, the *Quick Player* allows you to easily preview cuts in the List pane.

Figure 3:
Skylla Producer's
Quick Player



Cuts can be loaded into the Quick Player in one of two ways:

- Double-click a cut in the List Pane. The cut is readied for play.
- Right-click a cut to open the Context menu, then click Load and Play. The cut plays immediately.

A slider in the Quick Player progress bar indicates relative position of audio playback and also allows you to easily begin playback at any point. Click the progress bar to immediately begin play at the point under the cursor. Use the mouse to move the position slider to quickly skip forward or backward in the file.

Colors on the progress bar are used to indicate the following:

Yellow indicates the main body of the cut.

Green is used to indicate the intro time of a cut (if set).

Red indicates the period after the end of message (EOM).

Adding Cuts to the Skylla Inventory

There are two ways to add cuts to the Skylla inventory—by importing existing audio files in Import View, or by creating new audio cuts in Record View.

User-Supplied Information

No matter which method you use to create carts in Skylla Producer, there are several fields of information that must be filled out by you. Most of the fields are optional... but one is absolutely mandatory.

Cart

In the cart field, you supply the identifier used by music-scheduling and/or traffic-and-billing software to play the cut in Skylla.

The cut *must* have a valid cart identifier. With certain exceptions, cart identifiers can be any combination of up to sixteen letters [A-Z], numbers [0-9] and the underscore character. Note that whitespace is not allowed in a cart number.

Note that, while Skylla allows cart identifiers of up to sixteen characters, music-scheduling and traffic-and-billing software may have limitations on the number and/or type of characters allowed in the cart identifier. Check with your software provider for more information.

Cut

Carts can contain one or more audio cuts. The cut number is automatically incremented each time a new cut is added to the cart. Carts with only one cut always have a cut number of 1.

Station(s): Each cart created in Skylla Producer can be assigned to one or more stations. The Station(s) field allows you to select the station(s) where the cart is to be available for play.

Category: The Category field allows you to either select a pre-defined category (Music, Commercials, etc.) for a newly-created cart or define a new category if needed.

Title: Each cut should be assigned a title that easily identifies the audio cut. Note that when a cart has multiple cuts, each cut can be assigned a unique title to easily identify that cut. The title information for a cut is logged by Skylla when a cut is played successfully.

Outcue: The last spoken phrase on a cut is usually specified in the Outcue field. Outcue information is displayed by Skylla when a cut moves to the Next to Air and On the Air boxes.

Ending: Usually used for music, the Ending field offers three predefined choices: “Cold,” “Fade” or “Quick.” If a more descriptive ending is desired, enter that text in the box.

Start Date: The earliest *date* a cut is considered valid for play is its start date. If no start date is specified, today's date is used. If multiple cuts are stored in a cart, each cut can have its own unique start date.

Start Time: The earliest time a cut is considered valid for play is its start time. If no start time is specified, 12:00 midnight is used. If multiple cuts are stored in a cart, each cut can have its own unique start time.

End Date: The latest date a cut is considered valid for play is its end date. If no end date is specified, the cut is valid beginning on its start date and time and never expires.

End Time: The time of day on the end date after which a cut is no longer valid for play. If no end time is specified, the cut is valid for play until 11:59 p.m. Note that you must specify an end *date* before you can specify an end *time*.

These fields are useful for use with satellite-based systems:

- **Announcer:** The *Announcer* is useful for defining groups of carts to be played during a specific segment of a satellite program. This field is a *combo box*; you may either select an existing announcer from the dropdown list, or you may define a new announcer by entering his/her name in the field.
- **Fill:** *Fill* defines a cut as being eligible to be automatically added to satellite breaks lacking sufficient content to cover a mandatory break. The dropdown box contains three predefined types: “Spots,” “Music” and “News.” The “Spots” type must be used when a cut is to be used to fill short breaks.

These fields can be used to store information related to songs stored in the Skylla inventory:

- **Artist:** Artist information can be used to quickly find one or more songs by a specific artist or group. When providing artist information, use a consistent style for easier searches.
- **License:** A song's licensing information (ASCAP, BMI, SESAC, etc.) can be stored in this field.
- **Album:** A song's album title can be stored in this field.
- **Composer:** A song's composer(s) can be specified here.
- **Year:** The year a song was originally released can be stored here.
- **Trivia:** The *Trivia* field is a freeform field where you can enter any relevant information about a cut. What you store here is completely up to you.

Adding Cuts Using Import View

If you have not already done so, click the “Import” button to switch to Import View. Skylla Producer shifts to Import View, similar to this example:

