The
Software Construction Company

SCC MediaGrid™
Version 6

SCC MediaGrid ™ is a cross-platform client application for both Windows and Macintosh operating systems, that supports dynamic search, display and editing of a wide variety of multimedia file-types stored either in folders on a server, or contained in one or more libraries within an SCC MediaServer content management system.

In addition SCC MediaGrid provides a sophisticated set of advanced functions such as customizable edit and print layout screens, user definable metadata fields, batch record editing, a variety of preview and compare techniques, image soft-cropping, drag-and-drop linking and transfer of metadata, the creation of AutoFill editing macros, drop palette support for 3rd party applications as well as many other workflow and delivery automation techniques.

Features

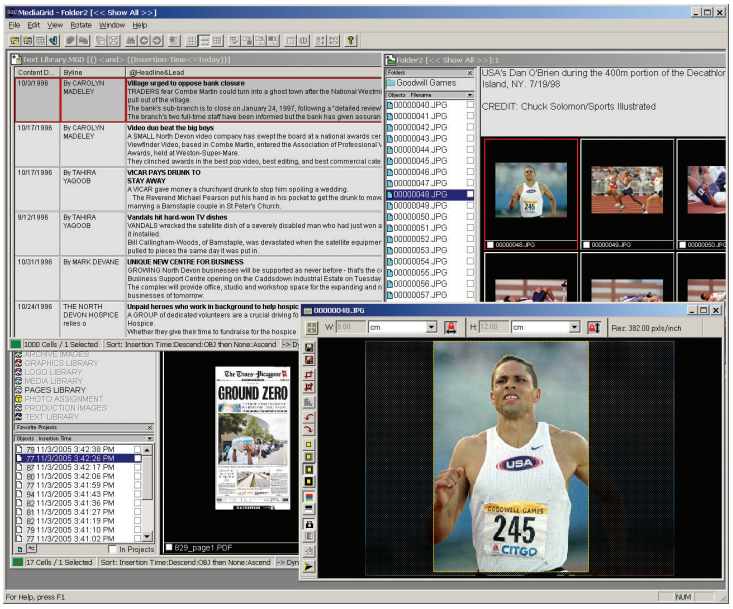
- **Runs natively on Microsoft Windows and Macintosh OSX**
- **Multithreaded architecture**
- **Fast, reliable operation**
- **Supports folder based image browsing in addition to SCC MediaServer library access for other multimedia file-types**
- **Provides both Autonomy full-text search and Production (time-based) search modes**
- **Any number of open watchspaces allows parallel connection to any number of server folders and libraries from one or more SCC MediaServer systems**
- **Watchspaces viewable in either Grid or Multi-Column modes with flexible and user definable attribute display**
- **Information Bar and Attribute Clusters**
- **Preview window supporting soft cropping of images**
- **Compare window supporting 2 up and 4 up comparison display in addition to 1 up slide-show**
- **Customizable cell corner flags**
- **Copy or move objects to single or multiple destinations**
- **Drop palette provides drag and drop launch of files into third party applications**
- **Customizable editing dialogs supporting user-defined attributes**
- **Customizable value dependant popup lists for use within editing dialogs**
- **Customizable print layouts supporting user-defined attributes**
- **Custom workflow task automation scripts for interaction with 3rd party production systems**
- **AutoFill macros for automatic population of attributes**
- **Derived searches for automatic search generation**
- **Supports user creation of private or shared projects**
- **and much more...**

Cross-Platform Support

MediaGrid is cross-compiled and is essentially identical on Windows and Macintosh OSX operating systems. Approximately 95% of the software code is written independently of the operating system leading to the availability of updates for all platforms almost simultaneously. Platform-optimized libraries and sophisticated cross-platform compiler technology ensure the best possible performance across all supported platforms.

"Folder Watcher" and "Database Watcher" Modes

SCC MediaGrid supports the creation of any number of folder watchspaces each of which are able to monitor one or more local or server based folders in order to provide a dynamically updating display of previews extracted from JPEG images contained in these folders.



At the same time SCC MediaGrid also supports the creation of any number of database watchspaces, each of which monitor one or more "libraries" from an SCC MediaServer system. Each database watchspace has the ability to connect to a separate SCC MediaServer system provided it is accessible through the TCP/IP network.

Supports Autonomy Full-Text and Production Searching

SCC MediaGrid database watchspaces support rapid searching across millions of multimedia files stored in one or more libraries within an SCC MediaServer content management system.

The MediaGrid client application supports full-text searches using the Autonomy search engine embedded within the SCC MediaServer system. MediaGrid also allows Production searches, supported natively by the underlying Microsoft SQL Server and Oracle database management systems that are at the core of the SCC MediaServer system.

The Autonomy full-text search engine provides a variety of sophisticated search capabilities including boolean, phrase, root word, wildcard, proximity, synonym, phonetic (fuzzy logic), natural language, and date range searches.

Powerful technology unique to SCC MediaGrid allows any Search to be set in dynamic mode. This means that even if a match is not found during the first search, when files matching a user's search criteria arrive in the database library the results are delivered automatically to that user's client.

Search criteria can be stored and then recalled quickly from disk, restored from a history of the previous queries, or from a memory

pipeline by using MediaGrid's forward and back search history buttons located on the toolbar of each database watchspace.

Thumbnail Grid and MultiColumn Watchspace Modes

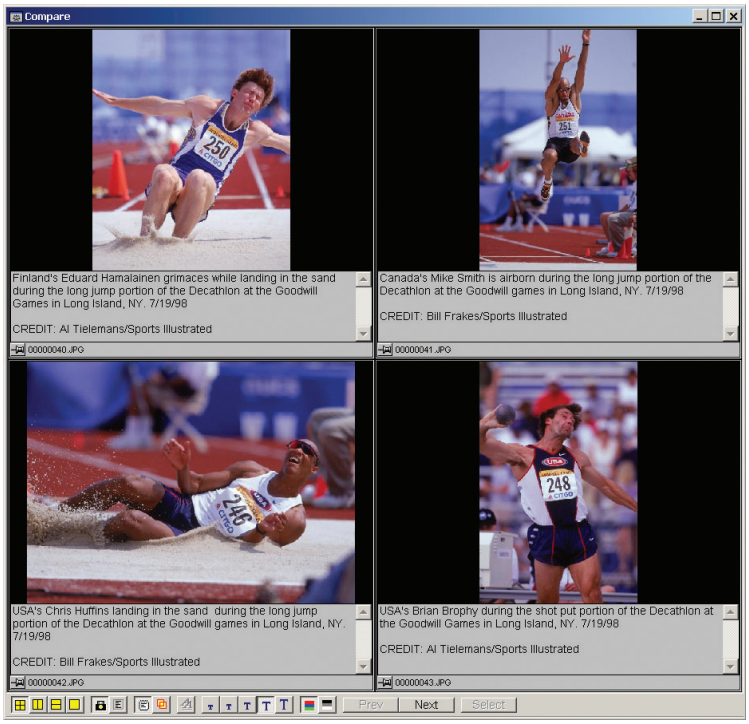
SCC MediaGrid watchspaces support both grid and multicolumn display modes allowing a user to choose a display mode that is best suited to the multimedia file-type being viewed. For example, the user may prefer to view images in a grid mode, but stories, budgets and assignments in a multicolumn spreadsheet-style mode. In grid mode, the user is able to select the attribute displayed beneath each thumbnail. In multicolumn mode the user is able to add and arrange any number of attributes within the spreadsheet view, adjusting the width and depth of each attribute column as preferred. Font and point size used to display attributes within grid and multicolumn views is user selectable.

Information Bar and Attribute Cluster Support

SCC MediaGrid watchspaces incorporate an optional "Information Bar", which when enabled appears across the top of the watchspace and displays information relevant to the selected record. Double clicking inside the information bar allows the user to select an attribute for display. The inforamation bar also incorporates an attribute cluster editor tool that allows the user to design attribute clusters comprising one or more attributes together with descriptive text and visual styling, either for display within the information bar or alternatively added as columns within the multicolumn display mode.

Object List Display Panel

MediaGrid watchspaces incorporate an optional "Object List Panel" displaying a scrollable list of objects by filename, creation time, modification time, database insertion time, IPTC content date or by filesize. In addition, the object list panel also displays a list of the currently watched folders or MediaServer libraries. Objects appearing in the list are color coded by the containing folder or library. Individual folders or MediaServer libraries can be easily enabled or disabled within the object list panel, at which point only those objects contained in the selected folders or libraries are displayed.



Preview Window

The MediaGrid Preview Window displays large images for viewing and managing the advanced cropping features. Images can be temporarily rotated for "right side up" cropping of incorrectly oriented photos. When using the Preview Window, the cropped part of an image can be copied onto the clipboard or into a low-resolution JPEG file. Images can be optionally dimmed or blackened outside of the cropped region for better visualization. Preset crop definitions can be created and recalled at any time to quickly apply commonly used crop dimensions.

Compare Window

The Compare Window allows a user to quickly choose the best files by scrolling through a selected subset of search results and "pinning down" the most suitable images. The Compare Window allows side by side comparison, top to bottom comparison, or two by two comparison of the image or text attributes. When the best files have been "pinned" in the compare window they are subsequently selected within the watchspace window from where they can be cropped, published, printed, copied, deleted, and so on. In addition, the compare window provides a one up mode that can be used to provide slide-show functionality.

Both preview and compare windows allow images to be previewed in color or black and white.

Conditional Corner Flags

MediaGrid's conditional corner flags feature displays color-coded corner flags on thumbnail cells whenever certain matching criteria is met. A typical use might be to identify and mark images that are protected, published, copyrighted, or edited, however the meaning of each corner flag is customizable by the user.

Copy and Move Objects

The user is easily able to select one or more records from a MediaGrid watchspace, and either copy or move these records to one or more target directories either by a menu command, keyboard shortcut, or drag and drop action. If files with the same name already exist in the target directory, the user is prompted to replace or auto-rename the newly copied or moved files.

Configurable Drop Palette

SCC MediaGrid provides a configurable drop palette, which by default is docked to the right side of the MediaGrid application window, but can be easily detached and positioned anywhere on screen. Third party applications, server directories, and AutoFill scripts can be added to the drop palette allowing selected objects to be launched into a preferred application, copied to a target directory, or AutoFilled with a predefined set of attribute values, as a result of a simple drag and drop action.

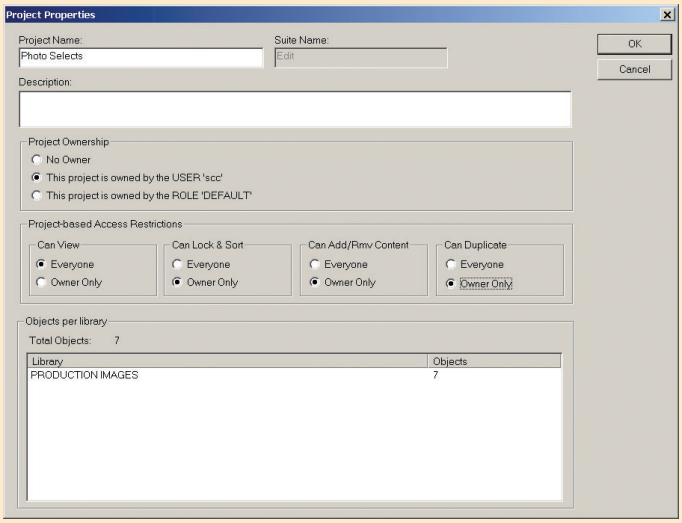
Customizable Editing Dialogs

The SCC MediaGrid user can layout custom attribute editing dialogs by using a separate designer application (included with MediaGrid). Several attribute editing dialogs are shipped as standard and may be customized as desired. User defined attributes created within MediaServer are immediately available for incorporation into attribute editing dialogs.

Create Projects

The MediaServer system can organize database records into collections of objects, called "Projects". A project may contain objects of multiple formats and from multiple libraries.

MediaGrid users are able to create their own private projects, or choose to share these with other users with the same user role or with everyone. Users with the necessary permissions are able to lock and sort projects, at which time other users are prevented from adding and removing items. Once locked, the objects in the project can be custom sorted by using the mouse to drag cells into position, or by using keyboard cursor keys to reposition the selected cells. When the project is unlocked, the custom sort order is preserved for later display, such as when sequencing images in a slide show.



Search Projects

Projects are dynamic, just like libraries. That is, when an object is added to a project, the new object automatically appears in your MediaGrid watchspace if it meets the current search criteria and if that watchspace is configured to search the project dynamically. Similarly, if objects are removed from a project they are automatically removed from the watchspace as well.

Projects do not actually contain objects, but rather they contain references to objects contained in libraries. This is important for maintaining object integrity and identity, avoiding duplication when placing an object in multiple projects.

User Definable Pop-up Lists

Users can define and configure popup lists that pull down from any attribute in an attribute editing dialog. For example, a frequently used list of categories can be presented in a pull down from the Category field within the editing dialog. Dependencies can also be defined that make the contents of a popup list depend on the value entered in another field. For example, the list of available Subcategories can be made to depend on the contents entered into the Category field. Using Popup Lists reduces typing time and increases the accuracy of attribute entry.

Batch Editing Mode

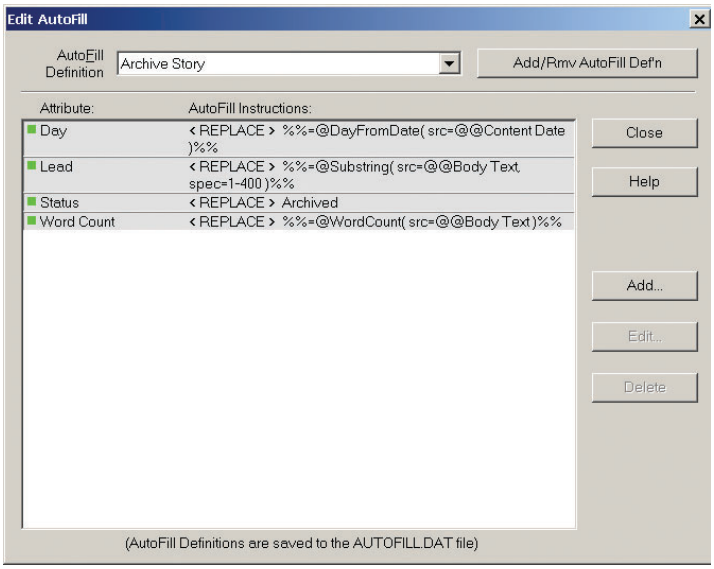
The MediaGrid application supports an “Infuse” mode, where any attribute editing dialog can be used to edit attributes from one or more selected objects in a watchspace. Users enter new values only for those attributes that should be changed, and those changes are applied to each of the selected files or records. In this way infuse mode can be used to add a byline, or a set of keywords to multiple records, while at the same time preserving the content of other fields within each record.

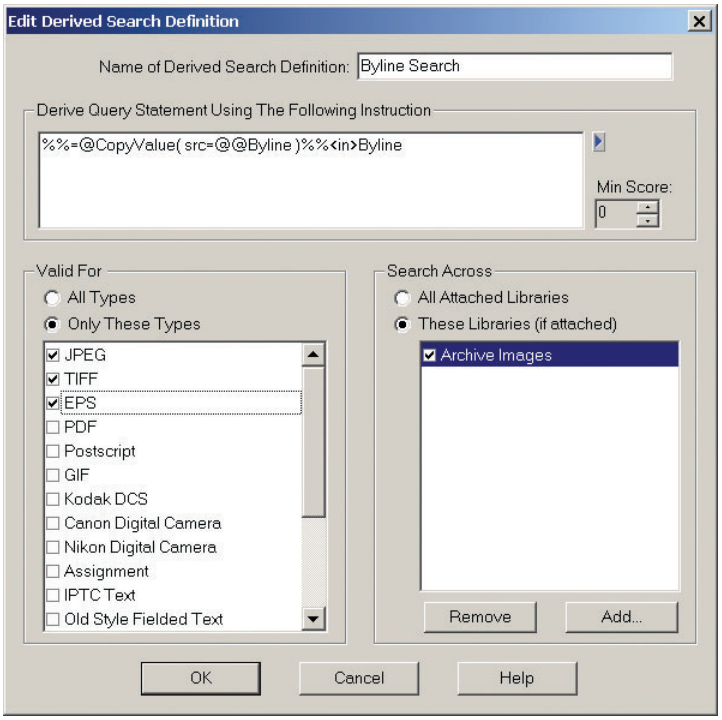
Customizable Print Layouts

The SCC MediaGrid user can layout custom printed page formats by using a separate designer application (included with MediaGrid). A single proof can contain data from several files to create catalog pages or contact sheets or just a single, selected record. Several print formats are shipped as standard, but may be customized as necessary.

Scripted Task Automations

MediaGrid includes a task automation facility that offers a set of functions which can be linked together to create a custom command. For example, the automation command can be configured to bring up an attribute dialog to elicit user input, run an AutoFill command, print a proof, export a customized delimited file containing all the attributes, and then copy the file into a folder that is monitored for further processing and distribution by SCC MediaFactory or for insertion into a third-party production system.





AutoFill Macro Generation

SCC MediaGrid supports a programmable "AutoFill" environment that provides for the creation of scripted attribute updates for use during the file insertion and the data enhancing process.

AutoFill instructions greatly reduce the amount of editing time and increase the accuracy of repetitive tasks such as word count calculation, lead paragraph extraction, adding pre-determined values to fields such as Byline, Title, Date and Time, and changing record status.

Selecting one or more records from the search results screen and then picking the relevant item from the AutoFill menu in MediaGrid causes the batch update to take place.

User Definable Drag and Drop Behaviors

SCC MediaGrid provides a "Drag and Drop Coordinator" facility which supports the creation of any number of custom drag and drop behaviors. As part of the drag and drop operation, customized AutoFill scripts can be automatically applied to the source record, to the target record, or to both at the same time.

Derived Searches

The Derived Search function allows the creation of saved Autonomy searches that are derived from and depend on the attribute contents of a selected record.

For example, a derived search on "Byline"could extract the byline content of a selected record and use it to find all other records containing the same Byline value. Or a derived search could be setup to extract the last name of the Byline and search for all records that contain the same last name in the Byline, or in other fields.

Multi-Object Linking

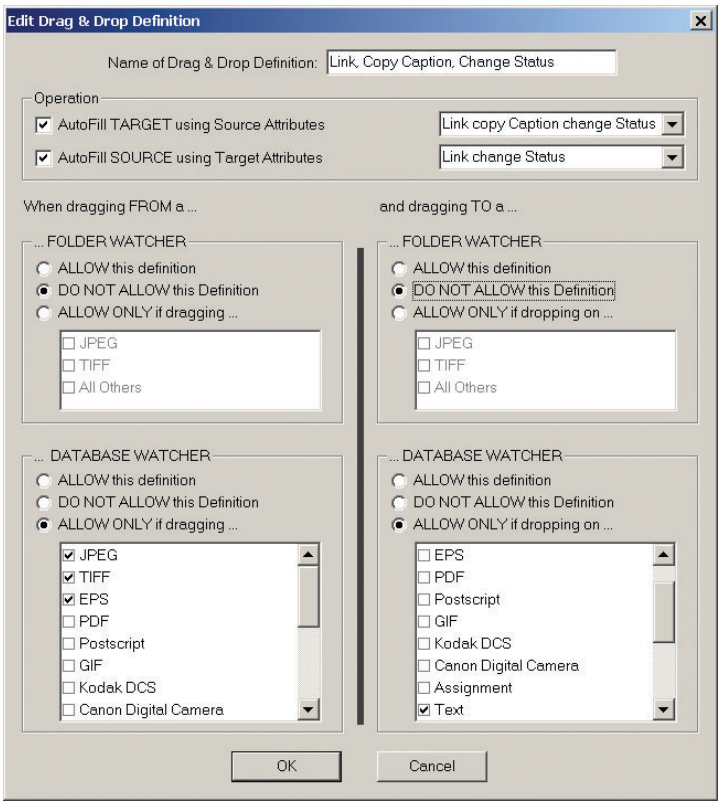
SCC MediaGrid supports "Multi-Object Linking", which allows a user to link groups of objects, or files, contained within the MediaServer database to each other.

In both MediaGrid and Web browser clients, linked objects are displayed with a special icon to indicate their relationship with other objects. When clicked, all linked records, along with their source objects, are retrieved and displayed.

Multi-Object links are hierarchical and multi-tiered, which means, among other things, that if one object in a pair of linked objects is linked to another object, the outer objects are not necessarily linked to each other.

Multi-Object Linking can be configured to run server-side, where SCC MediaFactory automatically links objects that match predetermined criteria, either in real-time, or at certain times of the day or night; or client-side using SCC MediaGrid to manually drag and drop items onto each other, either within the same watchspace or across multiple watchspace windows.

Preferences

An extensive set of user options and preferences are supported, making it possible to configure and customize the look, behavior, and operation of the MediaGrid application.

Preferences can be password protected to prevent changes to a critical configuration setup, such as Automation Sequences. This is useful to supervisors that want to maintain consistent preferences over a network of workstations.