Using SoundApp

Getting Help
This topic and the Preferences topic describe how to use SoundApp and how to configure it for handling special cases. I can be reached via e-mail (see the Notes topic), and the SoundApp home page is located at <http://www-cs-students.stanford.edu/~franke/SoundApp/>. The latest version of SoundApp can always be downloaded from this location.

Balloon help is always available to provide more information about the various preferences, menu items, and buttons in SoundApp.

Drag and Drop Interface
Playing sounds with SoundApp is simple; just drag and drop sound files onto the SoundApp icon. You need not wait until a group of sounds have finished playing before dragging and dropping more sound files onto the SoundApp icon. SoundApp will asynchronously process additional drag-and-drop requests by adding them to the queue of sounds currently being played. SoundApp can also optionally search through nested folders dropped onto it, looking for sounds to play inside each folder. In addition, files can be played via the Play menu item.

In addition to playing many file types, SoundApp can also convert supported sound files to a number of formats. The suitcase option, in particular, creates files that can be opened in the System 7 Finder and manipulated just like font suitcases. In order to convert files, hold down the conversion key, by default the shift key, when dragging files onto SoundApp's icon. Be sure to continue holding the conversion key down until SoundApp comes to the foreground. The conversion key can be changed in the Keys section of the Preferences dialog.

Using Play Lists
Files can be added to a Play List by dragging files or folders into it from the Finder or by using the Add menu item. In addition, files can be added to a new list by holding down the modifier key specified in the Keys section of the Preferences dialog box while dragging files onto SoundApp. By default, this is the option key.

If the Macintosh Drag and Drop Manager is installed, files can be re-ordered by dragging file selections. Files can be dragged out of the Play List and converted files will be placed in a folder on the desktop.

Play Lists can be saved and then opened later. This can be used to group a favorite selection of sounds for easy playback. SoundApp can have any number of Play Lists opens at a time, and files can be dragged between them.

Clicking the "Repeat" check box before playing will cause SoundApp to play the sounds in the list continuously, and enabling the "Shuffle" check box will cause the files to be played in a random order when either of the Play buttons are clicked. The Play and Convert buttons play or convert the currently selected files; the Play All and Convert All buttons will play or convert all the files in the list regardless of the selection. Typing the first few letters of a sound's name will cause that sound to be highlighted. Double-clicking on the selection will play the selected files.

Controls
While sounds are playing, typing command-period will halt playback for the current selection of files dropped onto SoundApp. Typing period will halt the playback of the current sound and play the next one, if any. In addition, the left and right arrow keys can be used to skip to the next sound or return to the previous sound, respectively. Typing semicolon will stop processing after the current file has finished and the space-bar pauses and resumes playback. The "+" and "-" keys can be used to change the volume during playback.

An optional Controls Palette can be displayed which contains buttons that mimic the controls of a CD

player. The buttons are in order: convert all files in the current play list; play all files in the current play list; toggle pause for playback; stop processing; jump to the previous file; jump to the next file; and stop processing after the current file has finished. If the command key is held down while clicking on the convert or play icon only the selection will be processed.

The Controls window can be displayed using either the "Display Controls Palette" preference in the General pane or the Show Controls menu item in the Options menu.

Memory Allocation

SoundApp allocates memory for processing from the temporary memory allocation facilities. MOD playback can alternatively allocate memory from its own partition if the appropriate preference is set in the MOD pane of the Preferences dialog.

MIDI files currently use memory allocated from the application heap only. Fortunately, MIDI files are usually rather small, so this is not a big problem. However, it is possible one may need to increase the memory allocated to the SoundApp application in order to play large MIDI files.

AppleScript

SoundApp has limited support for AppleScript in this version. In addition to the Core Suite of open, run, and quit (print is not supported), SoundApp supports the following custom verbs:

◊ convert alias/alias list/string/string list [to alias/alias list/string/string list] [channels default/mono/stereo] [bits default/eight/sixteen] [law full/reduced/smart] [with(out) DOSify] [as System7/suitcase/AIFF/Wave/NeXT]: Converts the specified file(s) to the destination file(s). If multiple source files are specified and a single destination, the destination is assumed to be a folder. If no to parameter is specified, the default conversion output method is used (as specified in the Convert pane of the Preferences dialog). The channels and bits parameters allow the output file channel and bit preference to be overridden. If these are omitted, the value specified in the Convert pane of the Preferences dialog will be used. The law parameter controls whether µ-law, a-law and ADPCM files are converted as 16-bit (full), 8-bit (reduced) or 8-bit with smart processing (smart). The DOSify parameter causes new output file names to be created with the archaic MS-DOS 8.3 filename format. This is ignored if a single file is converted and the to parameter is specified. The as parameter allows the output sound format to be specified. Again, if it's not specified, the default in the Convert pane of the Preferences dialog will be used instead.

◊ play alias/alias list/string/string list [bits default/eight/sixteen] [law full/reduced/smart] [buffer size] [modDriver trecker/preferTrecker/preferZSS/ZSS] [modStereo mono/stereo/enhanced] [with(out) modFilter] [with(out) modSixteen] [with(out) modTempMem] [modVolume volume] [modRate rate]: Plays the file or files passed as the direct parameter. The bits and law parameters function as above. The buffer parameter specifies the size in kilobytes of the buffer used for double-buffering. A value of zero means don't double-buffer; otherwise, the value must be at least 64. The modDriver, modStereo, modSixteen, modFilter, modTempMem, modRate and modVolume parameters control the "MOD Driver," "Stereo Mode," "Real-Time Filter," "16-Bit," "Use System Memory," "Playback Rate" and "Volume" settings in the MOD pane of the Preferences dialog respectively. The volume value must be at least zero and no more than 255. The rate value must be at least 8000 and no more than 48000.

◊ get status: returns one of idle, busy, paused indicating what SoundApp is currently doing.

◊ set status to paused, next, previous, stopped: changes the current activity status of SoundApp. "Paused" pauses or resumes playback, "next" and "previous" jump to the next or previous file and "stopped" stops processing immediately.

Notes

• MOD/S3M conversion only extracts the instrument samples.
• Some of the more unusual MOD formats cannot have their instruments extracted.
• Some rare WAVE compression formats, compressed VOC files and some sub-types of AU files are not supported.

Enjoy.