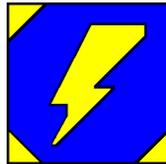


ActionLineTM

Reference Manual

version 1.1.2



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1. Introduction and Installation

Introduction

Welcome to **ActionLine**, a unique and powerful tool for creating interactive, dynamic Java™ applets for integration into HTML web pages. With **ActionLine** you will be able to build web pages that provide for more effective communications. No programming or scripting knowledge is required to create these applets, as **ActionLine** uses a unique, intuitive graphical user interface, and supports Drag and Drop technology. You can create on screen **ActionLinks** that will present a variety of graphic, text and sound files, all from within a single web page. You can give the people who view your pages the option of controlling the timing and appearance of each media type, or you can design an applet that will function automatically according to the timing you wish to employ.

Creating these applets is easy, and can be learned in several hours or less. It is assumed that you have already had some experience building traditional web pages using HTML tags with a text editor or page creation tool like WebWeaver or Adobe Page Mill™. We also assume that you have previously had experience placing your HTML pages on a server. You will also need a Java enabled browser that runs on your Macintosh.

ActionLine consists of three components. The **ActionLine Editor**, the **ActionLine Viewer**, and the **JavaViewer**. The first two components are Macintosh® based, and are available in either 68K or PowerPC versions. They will remain on your Macintosh when you are creating applets. The **JavaViewer** will ultimately be placed on your server, along with any applets you create, and the HTML pages that incorporate the applets. These Java components can be placed on any type of server, Unix, PC based, Macintosh or others. This allows your applets to be viewed by any computer user, regardless of platform type, as long as the computer has a web browser which supports Java.

How **ActionLine** works:

In **ActionLine** you will be creating an interactive **Slide** which you will turn into a Java applet for inclusion in your web pages. The basic elements of

an interactive slide are **Portals**, **ActionLinks**, **Actions** and **Buttons**. Each of these elements will be described briefly in this section.

You will use the **Tool Palette**, , to draw regions on the screen called **Portals**. Portals can serve several different purposes.

A **Portal** can:

- a). Contain an image, an image sequence, a sound, color or text
- b). Be an interactive **button**, which triggers an action when it is pressed
- c). Be both a **button** and contain information.
- d). Be a destination for an action such as Play, Stop, Hide, Show etc.
- e). Be an origin for an action.

The slides you create will contain one or more portals and one or more **ActionLinks**. ActionLinks are graphical elements drawn with the ActionLink Tool located on the Tool Palette. An ActionLink originates in a portal, called the originating portal, and ends either in another portal, within the same portal or on the background of the slide, depending on the intended function of the ActionLink. When a portal serves as the origin of an ActionLink, we refer to that portal as a **Button**, since it will initiate an action if it is pressed. A button is simply a portal with an actionlink associated with it.

ActionLinks specify actions that will be executed when the portal is pressed. These actions occur when the slide is viewed in the the ActionLine Viewer or in a web page.

A simple example of three portals and two ActionLinks is shown in Figure 1. In this example when portal 1 is pressed it places a picture, called “Jellybeans” in portal 3. When button 2 is pressed it hides portal 3 and its contents.

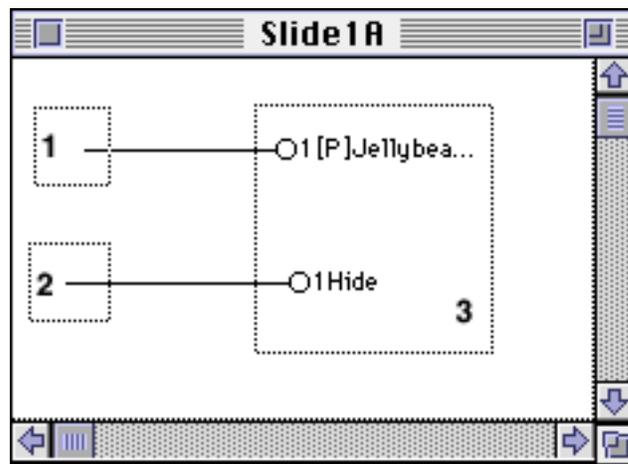


Figure 1.-.Simple slide in the ActionLine Editor

ActionLine has a wide variety of actions and dynamic effects called Transitions, that can be assigned to an ActionLink.

In working with ActionLine you will also be incorporating various types of media elements, which are briefly described below.

Data

Data includes images, image sequences, text, sound, and color. There are two ways to place data on a slide:

- Choosing the **Place Data** or **Place Image Sequence** command from the Content menu. When you use the Place Data command, ActionLine maintains a pointer to the file's location; it does not actually copy the data into the slide.
- Creating an ActionLink and choosing **Place Text**, **Place Data**, **Place Sequence** or **Portal Color** from the Action menu.

Images (Pictures)

Pictures are still images. ActionLine can use pictures in PICT or PhotoCD file formats.

Image Sequences

Image sequences are folders with two or more images in them. ActionLine uses image sequences to create rollover **ActionLinks**, highlight **ActionLinks** and animation sequences.

Text

Text is “rich” text that you create in the **ActionLine Editor** or paste from the Clipboard. Rich text includes typographic effects like bolding, color, and size; it does not include paragraph and page formatting. Text is created initially in black, and in the font and size most recently used to create text. Text color, font and style can be adjusted in the Editor at any time.

Sound

Sounds include sound files or sound resources. You can place a sound in any portal. **ActionLine** supports standard file types for Macintosh sound files:

- AIFF (American Interchange File Format)

Note that certain applications and games might use non-standard file types that are not supported by **ActionLine**.

A speaker icon indicates that a portal contains sound data.



Speaker icon

Lines

Lines are straight lines of 1 pixel width. Line can be added to a slide for greater emphasis. You can set the line color from the Get Portal/Line menu under the Content menu.

For a more complete description of how to create **ActionLine** slides, refer to the **ActionLine Getting Started Manual** included with your product.

Installation

Read Me file

A file called Read Me came with your copy of **ActionLine**. The file contains last-minute information not included in the manual.

You need the following hardware and software to use **ActionLine**:

- 5 MB of available RAM (**ActionLine** uses 4.4 MB of RAM)
- System 7.5 or higher
- QuickTime™ 2.5 or higher

You may have received your copy of **ActionLine** either electronically or on disk. If you received it electronically, it will already be on your computer. If you received the disk version, insert the disk in your computer, double click on the **ActionLine™.sea** icon and **ActionLine** will be installed on your computer. When you are done with the installation, you should have a folder that looks like the one in Figure 2.

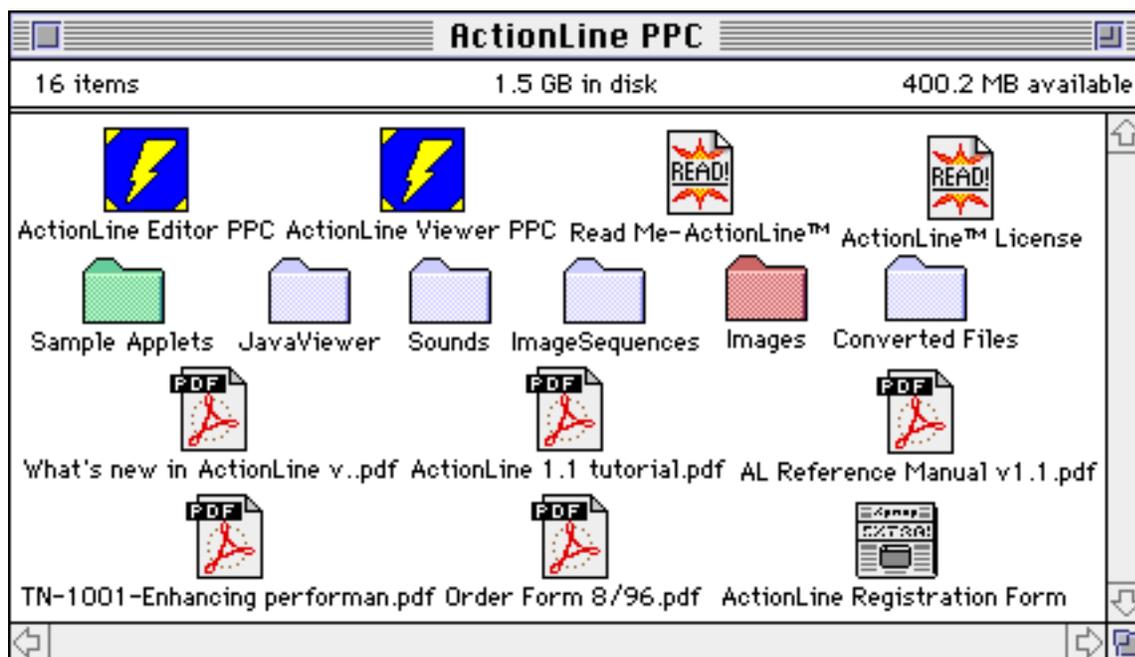


Figure 2.- **ActionLine** Folder Contents

Serializing your product. When you received your copy of **ActionLine** you also received a Serial Number. You will need this number to proceed with the rest of this manual. **You also should keep a copy of your Serial Number** for future reference. You will need it if you move your copy of **ActionLine** to a new computer, or if you request technical support from Interactive Media Corporation

2. Tools

This chapter describes ActionLine graphics tools.

- Tools menu
- Selection tool
- Rectangle portal tool
- Text tool
- Line tool
- Eyedropper
- ActionLink tool

Tools palette

The Tools palette is a graphic, tear-off menu. In the following figure, the Selection tool is highlighted.

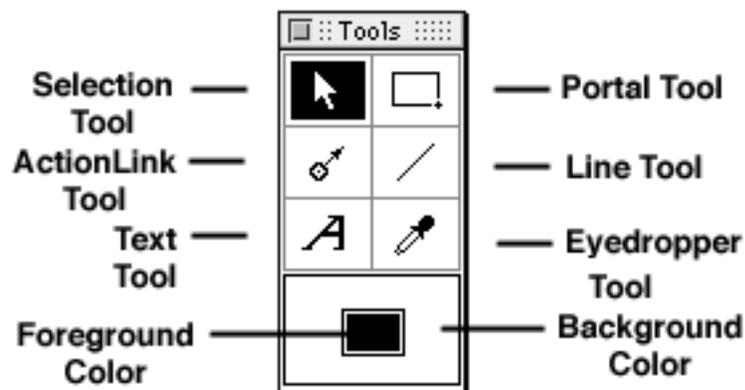


Figure 3.- Tools Palette

Selection tool



Use the Selection tool to select portals , lines or ActionLinks. To select multiple objects, hold down the Shift key and click each object, or use the Selection tool to draw a rectangle around the objects.

Rectangle portal tool



Use the Rectangle portal tool to draw rectangular portals with square corners. If Grid Snap is on, the portal corners coincide with grid points. The edges of a portal are assigned a random color by ActionLine. This is to aid in distinguishing one portal from another. These colors only appear in the Editor, and do not appear when viewing the slide in the ActionLine Viewer or the JavaViewer.

Click this tool outside a portal to select the Selection tool.

Eyedropper tool



Use the Eyedropper to sample a color on your monitor and apply it to a selected portal or make it the current background or foreground color. If a portal is selected when you choose the tool, the new color applies to the portal. If no portal is selected, the color becomes the new current background color. Colors from images cannot be selected using the eyedropper tool.

If a portal containing text is selected and the eyedropper tool is clicked on it with the option key held down, the text color will be applied to the Foreground Color portion of the tool palette

- To make the color at the tip of the Eyedropper the background color, click the Eyedropper. If a portal is selected, it will take on the background color when the eyedropper tool is clicked. If no portal is

selected, the slide will take on the color selected with the eyedropper tool.

Text Tool



The Text tool is used to place text in an existing portal. To place text in a portal, choose the Text tool and click it inside an existing portal and begin to type. You can also place text in a portal by selecting the portal with the selection tool and pasting in text from the clipboard, or dragging text from an application that supports Drag and Drop. To convert a data portal to a text portal, click the Text tool in the portal. If the portal presently holds data, that data is cleared. If you choose another tool before typing any text, **ActionLine** restores the data that was in the portal before you clicked with the Text tool.

ActionLink tool



Use the ActionLink tool to draw ActionLinks.

To Draw an ActionLink

1. Draw a portal that will act as the source of the **ActionLink**.
2. Choose the ActionLink tool.
3. Draw a link from the portal that will serve as a **ActionLink** to the portal you want the **ActionLink** to control.
4. Select an action for the Action menu.

ActionLinks are color coded with the color of the portal they originate in. This is an aid to distinguishing the origin of various links.

If you are creating a navigation **ActionLink**—which creates a link to a new URL—make the link terminate either within the originating portal or anywhere else on the slide that does not contain a portal.

- **To Place a file**, select the ActionLink, choose Place File, or Place Sequence from the Action menu, and then select the name

of the file you want to place. Its name appears beside the arrowhead.

■ **To Place Text** select the ActionLink, select Place Text and start typing.

■ **To Initiate an action**, Select the ActionLink and, choose the action from the **Action menu** (see “Action Menu” in Chapter 3, “Menus and Commands”). For example, to create a link that hides a portal, choose Hide from the Portal menu.

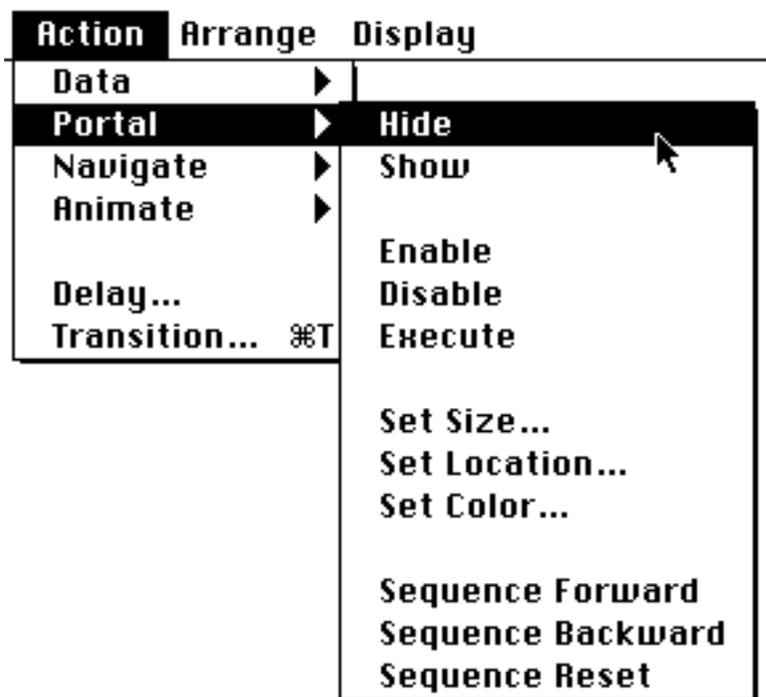


Figure 4. - Action Menu

After you choose the command, ActionLine labels the link with its function.

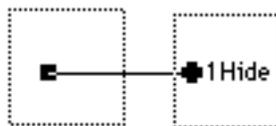


Figure 5. - ActionLink with tag

For **ActionLink** functions that don't affect a particular portal, you can end the link within the same **ActionLink** to keep the slide uncluttered. The following figure shows an example of a Goto URL link that starts and ends in the same portal.

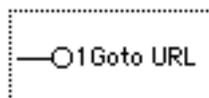


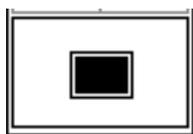
Figure 6. - ActionLink terminating in it's own portal

Line tool



Use the Line tool to draw lines. that contain lines, for visual emphasis. You can only draw lines 1 pixel wide. To create wider lines create a horizontal or vertical portal of the width and length and need. Lines are drawn in the foreground color.

Color indicator appears on the tear-off Tools palette.



Color indicator

The small square in the middle of the color indicator shows the foreground color, which applies to text. The large square shows the background color, which applies to portals, lines and slide backgrounds.

To change the color of a portal or line, select the object, then either click on one of the 81 colors in the Color Palette, or choose "Set Portal/Line Info" from the Content menu. A dialog box will appear which will let you choose any color.

3. Menus and commands

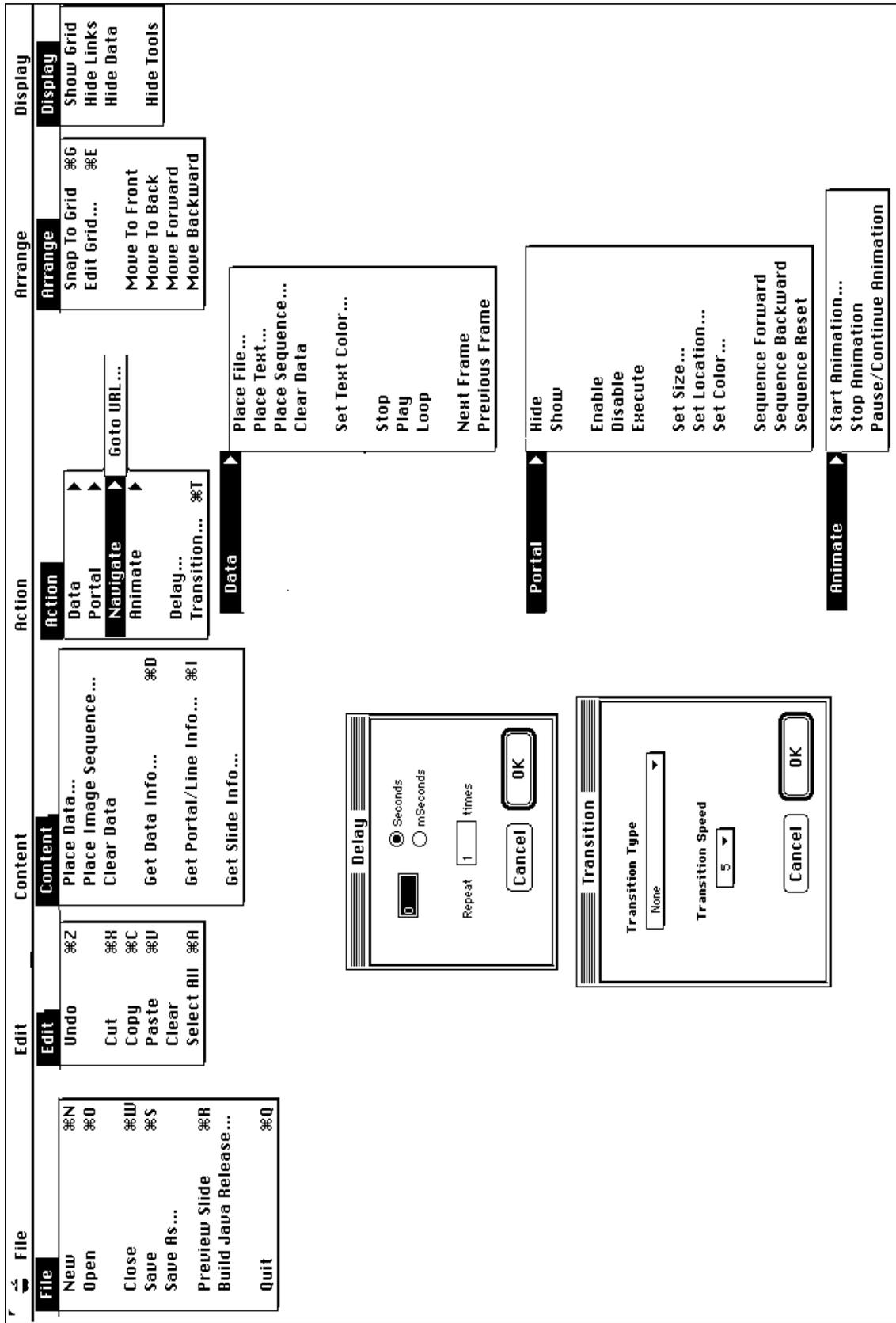
This chapter describes ActionLine menu commands and dialog boxes. A complete list of commands appears in the index.

- File menu
- Edit menu
- Content menu
- Action menu
- Arrange menu
- Display menu



The ActionLine Menu bar

There are six main menu headings in the ActionLine Editor. This chapter will explain each menu item, in the order in which they appear on the menus. An expanded view of the complete set of ActionLine menus, and sub-menus is shown on the following page. You may wish to tear it out for future references.



File menu

File	
New	⌘N
Open	⌘O
Close	⌘W
Save	⌘S
Save As...	
Build Java Release...	
Preview Slide	⌘R
Page Setup...	
Print...	⌘P
Quit	⌘Q

Figure 7. - File Menu

New

Creates a new slide.

Open

Displays the standard Open dialog box where you select an existing **ActionLine Slide** file.

Close

Closes the current slide.

You are asked if you want to save changes in the slide.

Save

Saves the current **Slide**. If the **Slide** is untitled, **ActionLine** displays the Save As dialog box so that you can enter a name.

Save As

Saves the current Slide in a new file, which you specify. Closes the current Slide and opens the new one.

Preview Slide

Launches the ActionLine Viewer. This will allow you to see a representation of what your slide will look like when it is running within a browser. This is a representation and is not an exactly what you will see in the browser, as different browsers function differently. The Preview is a good way to get a sense of how your buttons will function, and how your slides will look.

Page Setup

This will display the standard Macintosh print dialog box allowing you to set the parameters and page orientation of your printer.

Print

Prints the currently displayed slide. Depending on the options selected in the Display Menu, this will print all the ActionLinks and their associated portals, along with the data in the portals. The Display Menu allows you to hide either ActionLinks, Data or both.

Build Java Release

This will prepare a folder containing all the elements needed to build your web page. This will consist of a) a Java applet of your slide. b). an html page containing the ht ml tags needed to run your applet within a browser. and c). folders containing your the sounds, images and image sequences used in your slide. See the Getting Started Manual for how to convert these images to the proper formats for use on the web.

Quit

Quit closes the **ActionLine Editor** and returns you to the Finder. You are asked if you want to save any changes to any open **Slides**.

Edit menu

Edit	
Undo	⌘Z
Cut	⌘H
Copy	⌘C
Paste	⌘V
Clear	
Select All	⌘A

Figure 8. - Edit Menu

Undo

Undoes the last command.

Cut

Removes the selected object from the **Slide** and places it on the Clipboard, so that you can paste the object elsewhere.

Copy

Makes a duplicate of the selected object and places it on the Clipboard, so that you can paste the object elsewhere. . You can paste ActionLinks, portals and lines within a slide or between slides.

Paste

Places the contents of the Clipboard into the selected **Slide**, or portal. You can paste slides from one **Slide** onto another **Slide**.

Clear

Removes the selected object without putting it on the Clipboard.

Select All

Selects all portals and ActionLinks.

Content menu



Figure 9. - Content Menu

The commands on the Content menu allow you to place images, sounds and image sequences into portals that you have already created. These commands also allow you to place these data files on the slide, even if a portal has not yet been created. This menu also allows you to set slide size, background color for slides and portals, as well as attributes of the individual portals.

Place Data

Presents the Place Data dialog box, in which you choose a file to use in the selected portal. If no portal has been previously selected, a new portal will be created to accommodate the file.

You can place images or sounds of the following file types:

Image: JPEG, Gif, PICT or Photo CD

Sound: AIFF

NOTE: These file types are used and recognized by the ActionLine Editor. When you build your Java Release (see File Menu) you will have to PICT, PhotoCD (displayed as PICT files) and AIFF files to types recognized by Java. The following table defines the relevant file types. Tools for converting image and sound files are listed on IMC's web site and are commonly available both as commercial tools, shareware products and freeware.

Summary of File Formats supported by ActionLine Version 1.1

File Type	ActionLine Editor & Viewer	JavaViewer
Images	Gif, JPEG, PICT and Photo CD	Gif and JPEG
Sound	AIFF	au

Table 1. File Format Requirements

Place Image Sequence

Presents the Place Image Sequence dialog box, in which you choose an image sequence to use in the selected portal. If no portal has been previously selected, a new portal will be created to accomodate the file.

Image sequences

Image sequences are folders which contain two or more images. They are used for rollover buttons, highlight buttons and animation sequences.

Clear Data

Clears any data in the existing portal (text, images, image sequences or sounds)

Get Data Info

Presents a dialog box which allows you to set or change Text characteristics, including font, font size, style and font color. ActionLine retains the most recent settings chosen using this dialog box.

This menu item is only available if the selected portal contains text.

Set Data Position

Presents a dialog box which allows you to drag the text or image within a portal to an area of the portal. This allows you rearrange the orientation of an image within the portal. When the Data Position dialog box comes up, simply drag the text or image to the desired position.

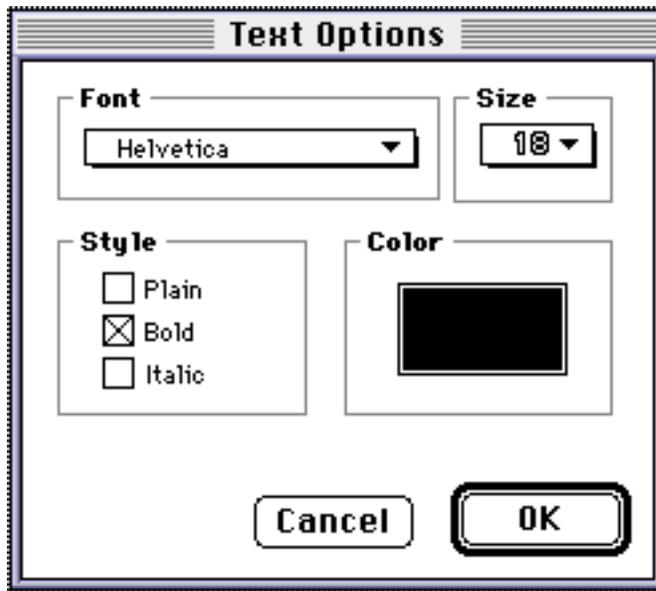


Figure 10. - Text Options Menu

Get Portal/Line Info

Presents a dialog box which allows you to set Line color or Portal Attributes, depending on whether the selected object is a portal or a line.

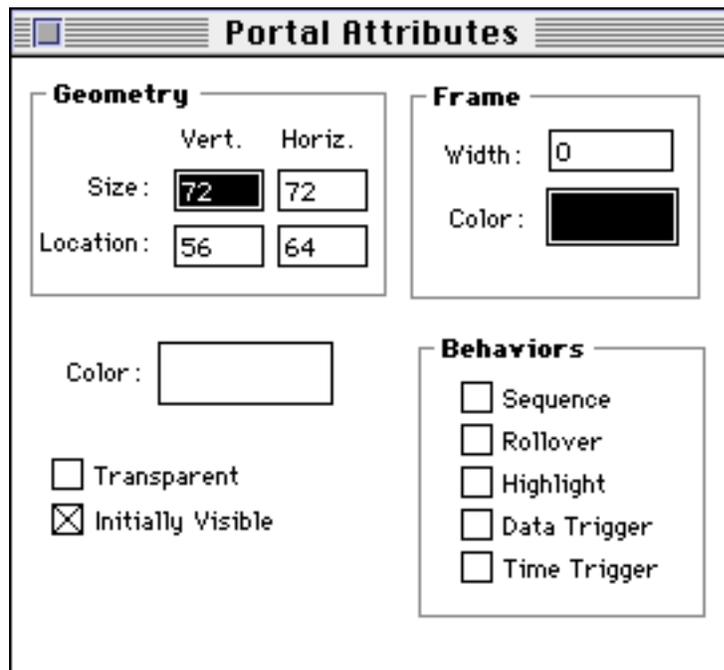


Figure 11. - Portal Attributes Menu

Portal Geometry defines the location and size of the portal in pixels. Location 0,0 is at the top left of the slide.

Portal Color is selected by clicking in the Color box. A color selection dialog will come up which will allow you to select any color for the portal. The selections do not take effect until the portal attributes dialog is closed, by clicking in the close box in the upper left-hand corner of the dialog box.

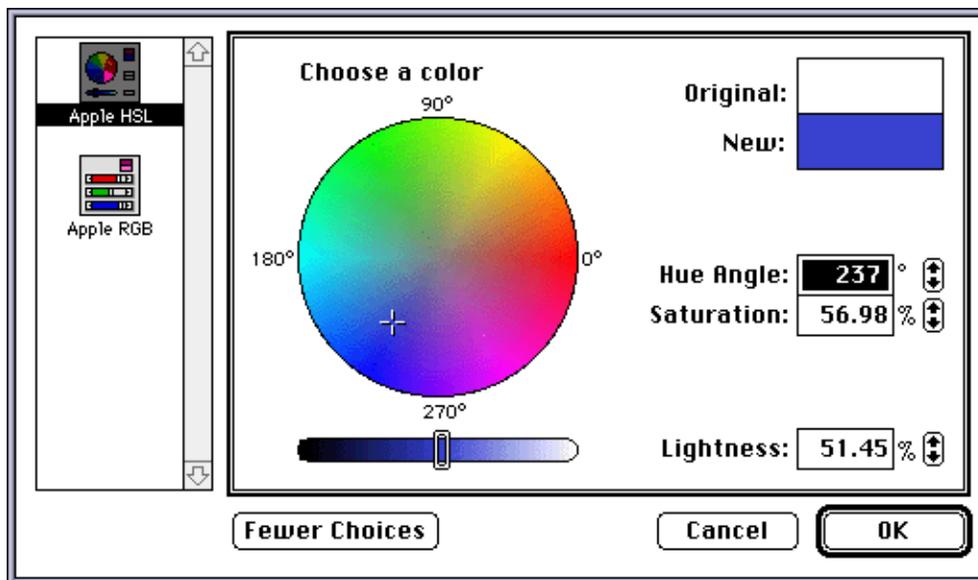


Figure 12. - Color Selection Menu

To select a color move the slider to until the color spectrum appears, and then move the cross-hair on the color spectrum until the desired color appears in the box labeled "New". If you know the values for the Hue Angle, Saturation and Lightness, you can enter them directly into the color selection data boxes.

When you have the desired color, click the "OK" button.

If the Transparent checkbox is selected, the portal will be transparent.

Summary of File Formats supported by ActionLine Version 1.1

File Type	ActionLine Editor & Viewer	JavaViewer
Images	Gif, JPEG, PICT and Photo CD	Gif and JPEG
Sound	AIFF	au

Table 1. File Format Requirements Version 1.1

If the "Initially Visible" checkbox is selected, the portal and its contents will be visible when the slide first appears. This is the default mode for ActionLine. If the box is unchecked, the portal will not be visible when the slide comes up. An ActionLink command will be required to make the portal and its contents visible when the slide is shown. This is described in more detail in the section on the **Action Menu**. Invisible portals can be quite useful when you want to reveal at some point after the slide initially appears on the screen.

Frames

The Frame area defines a colored border around the selected portal. Frames are drawn from the outer edges of the portal towards the portal's center. The frame width, in pixels, can be set in the portal attributes dialog box. The frame color can be set by clicking on the color box, which will bring up the color selection dialog box described above.

Portal Behaviors

Are a series of properties which can be assigned to any portal. They affect the way the portal will behave when it is a button and when various types of data are placed in it. The behavior assigned to a portal is a property of the portal, regardless of what type of data is placed in it, even if the data changes in the course of presenting the slide.

The first three behaviors, **Sequence**, **Rollover** and **Highlight**, apply to portals that are acting as buttons to initiate an action when the mouse is clicked on them. The **Time Trigger** and **Data Trigger** functions determine how a portal will behave when time dependent data such as sounds, transitions, animations and image sequences are displayed in the portal.

Sequence

The **Sequence** behavior triggers a different **ActionLink** each time the Portal is clicked. (When this behavior is not selected, all links from a Portal are activated with a single click. The sequence behavior is useful for portals that are the origin of multiple **ActionLinks**. For example, instead of separate portals for starting and stopping a sound, you can create a single portal with

two **ActionLinks** Play and Stop—and assign the portal the Sequence behavior. Clicking the **ActionLink** the first time plays the sound, clicking the next time stops it. Similarly, the sequence behavior can be used to deliver a slide show, with a different image appearing each time a portal is pressed.

When you select the Sequence behavior for a portal, its links are activated in the order they were created, which is indicated by the number at the tip of the **ActionLink** . To reverse the order the links are activated or reset the order, add a new **ActionLink** that applies one of the Sequence commands to Portal (see “Action Menu”).

Rollover

The **Rollover** behavior places a new image in the portal when the mouse is on top of the portal. This will only occur if the portal contains an image sequence of two or more images. The original image is restored when the mouse is moved out of the portal.

Highlight

The **Highlight** behavior places a new image in the portal when the mouse is pressed. This will only occur if the portal contains an image sequence of two or more images. The original image is restored when the mouse is released or the cursor is dragged out of the portal while the mouse **ActionLink** is still depressed. The **ActionLink** link(s) are only initiated if the mouse **ActionLink** is released. when the cursor is on top of the portal.

Data Trigger

The **Data Trigger** behavior activates all **ActionLink** links originating in the portal upon completion of data being loaded into a portal. This behavior is particularly useful when you want to synchronize events or actions with the end of a sound, or transition. The portal is activated when an image, image sequence, or sound is completely loaded in the portal.

Time Trigger

The **Time Trigger** behavior activates all **ActionLink** links originating in the portal upon completion of a time dependent event occurring in the portal.

This behavior is particularly useful when you want to synchronize events or actions with the end of a sound, or transition.

Get Slide Info

Presents a dialog box which allows you to set the size of the slide and it's background color.

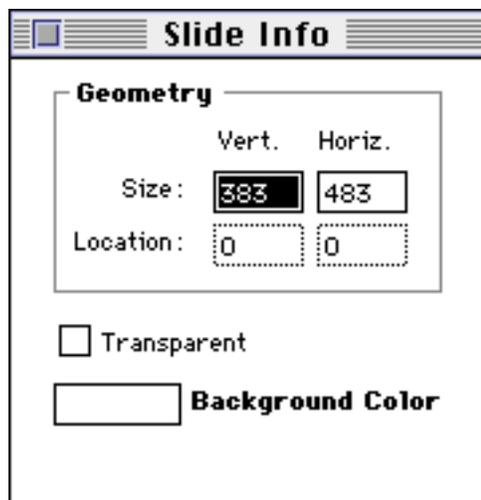


Figure 13. - Slide Info Dialog Box

The slide size, in pixels is set by typing the desired horizontal and vertical sizes into the appropriate boxes. The Location boxes are not active in this dialog box. To set the slide background color, click on the Background color box, and a Color selection dialog box will appear. If you click the box labeled Transparent, the background color of the HTML page that your Java applet is running on will appear as the slide background.

A slide can also have it's own tiled background. This is determined by placing an HTML tag within the HTML document. This will be described in Chapter 4.

Action menu

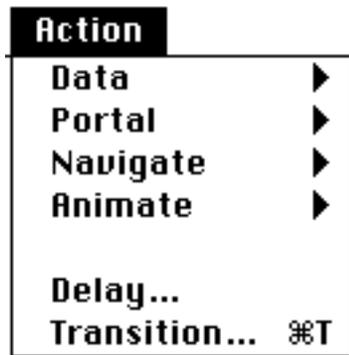


Figure 14. - Action Menu

The Action menu is available only when an ActionLink is selected. It is this menu which allows you to assign dynamic interactive properties to your portals. When talking about links we will frequently refer to the "originating portal" and the "destination portal". The originating portal is the portal which the link starts in. The destination portal is the portal the link ends in. The originating portal is the one that initiates the link action. The destination portal is the recipient of the action. Links are color coded, with the link color matching the color of the originating portal while the end of the link has a small circle with the color of the destination portal. This is illustrated in Figure 15.

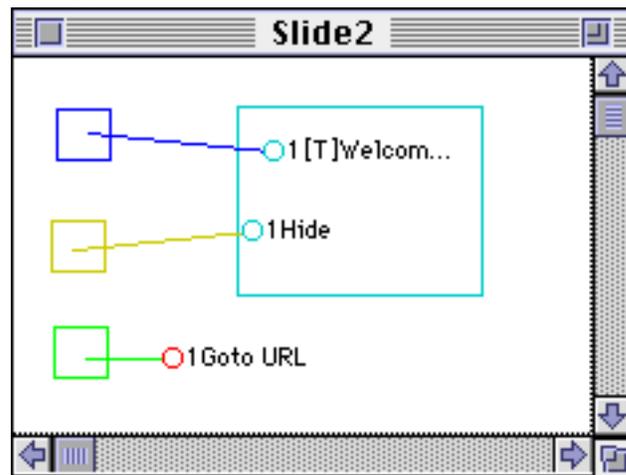


Figure 15. - Slide with three ActionLinks and their tags

Whenever you select a command from the Action menu, it is shown as a text tag on the selected link. These links and their associated tags provide a convenient **blueprint** of the interaction you have created. They allow for

rapid editing of your slide. Choose an item in the **Action** menu to to select link commands.

Data

The Data submenu has ten items, which affect the content of the destination portals while the slide is being viewed.

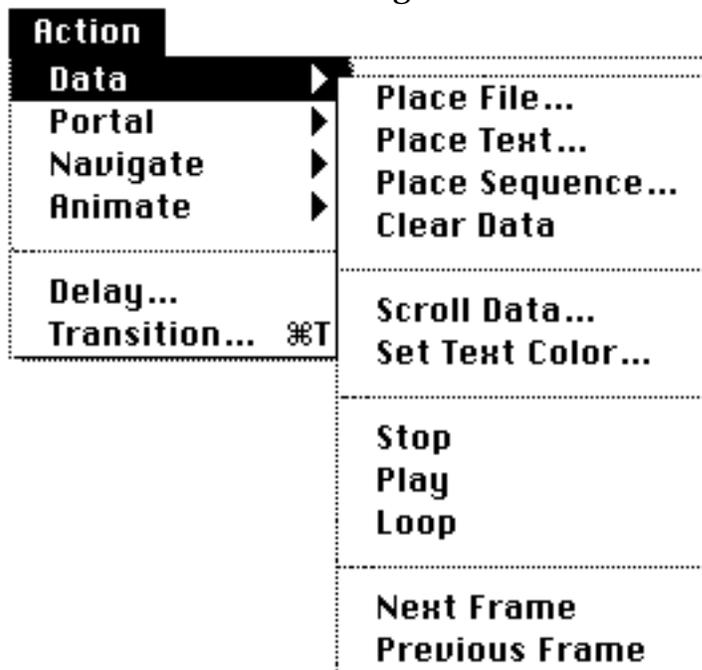


Figure 16. - Data submenu

Place File

The Place File command brings up a dialog box in which you choose a file containing either an image or a sound. The ActionLink will be tagged with the file name and its type (P) for an image file and (S) for a sound file. This type of link indicates that during the viewing of the slide, when the portal on the left is pressed, it will display an image called "Jellybeans" in the portal in the center of the slide.

Special additional effects, called transitions can be applied to the placement of images and other media elements. Transitions will be discussed later in this chapter.

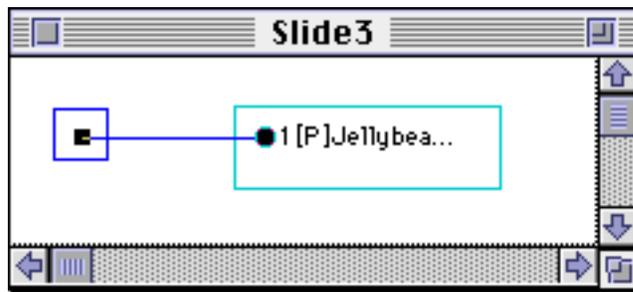


Figure 17. - Using the Place File Command for placing an image (Jellybeans)

Place Text

The Place Text command presents the Place Text dialog box. You can enter the text you want in this dialog box.

NOTE: You must press the return key wherever you want to start a new line of text.

To format the text for color, style, font and font size press the Text Attrs... button to display an Text Options dialog. Any properties you set in this dialog will apply to subsequent text you create, unless you change the text options again.

Font selection is more limited in Java than on the Macintosh at this time. The fonts which Java currently supports are Helvetica, Times Roman, Courier, Symbol and Dialog. If you use a different font in the ActionLine Editor, your web browser will substitute one of the five Java supported fonts.

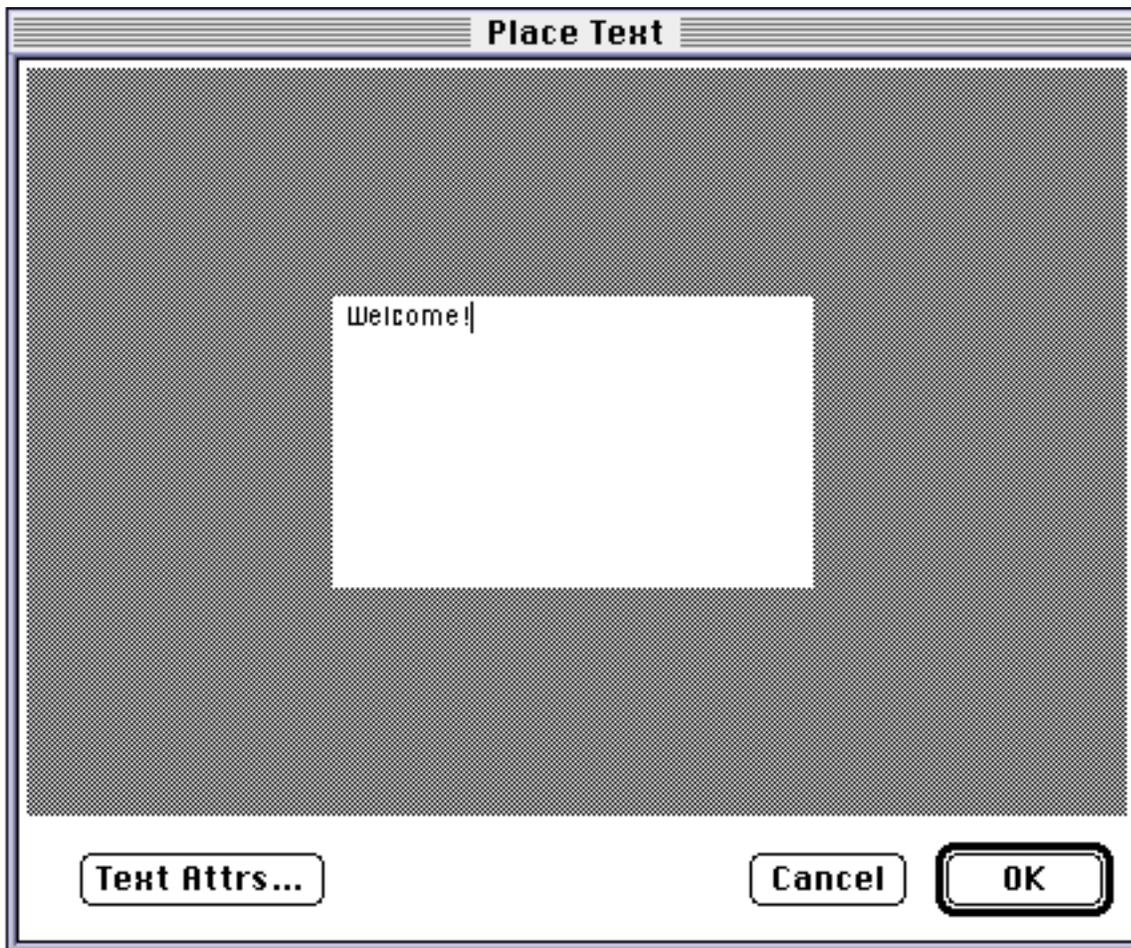


Figure 18. - Place Text dialog box

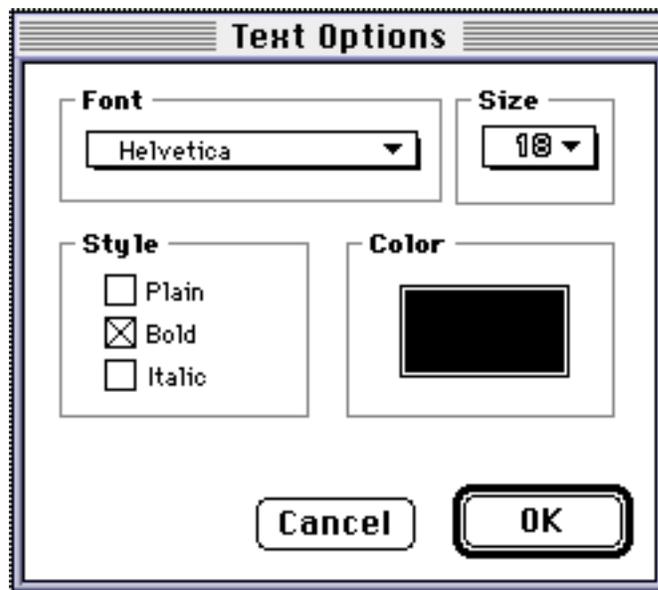


Figure 19. - Text Options dialog box

Your link will look like Figure 20. The [T] indicates that it is text, and the first few letters of the text is included along with an ellipsis. When the left hand portal is pressed, it will display the text "Welcome!" in the center portal.

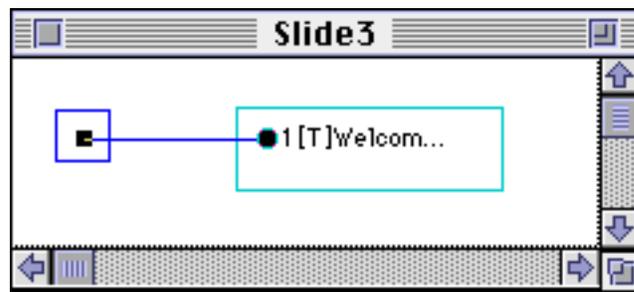


Figure 20. - Link using the Place Text Command for placing text

Place Sequence

The Place Sequence command brings up a dialog box in which you choose a folder containing two or more image files. When the portal initiating this link is pressed, it will bring up the first image in the image sequence in the destination portal. This is one mechanism where animation sequences can be changed dynamically during a slide presentation.

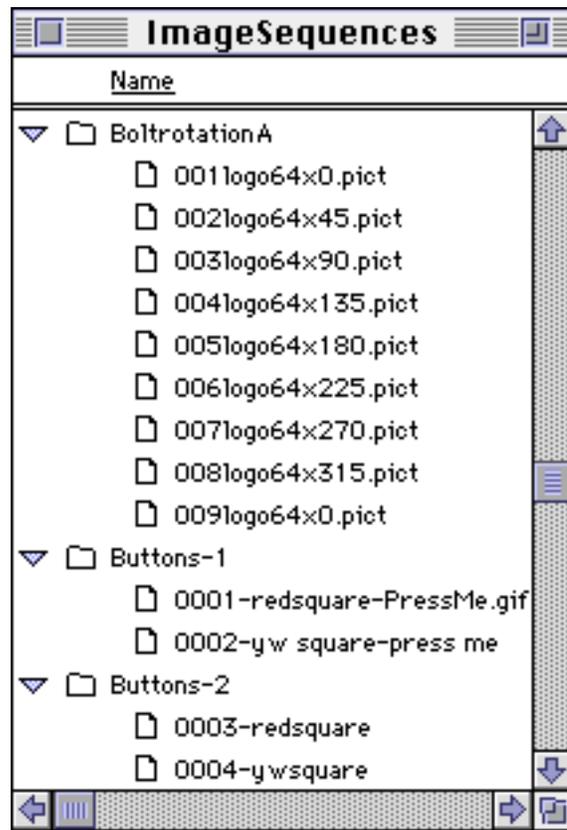


Figure 21. - Arrangement of folders within the master ImageSequences Folder

Generally it is a good idea to place folders containing image sequences inside a master folder called ImageSequences, but this is not required. What is essential is that all folders containing image sequences be placed inside a common folder. This is required for building your Java release. Each set of image sequences must be placed in their own folder. A sample of how these might be arranged is shown above. The BoltrotationA folder contains nine images making up an animation. The Buttons-1 and Buttons-2 folders contain two images each which are used for rollover buttons and highlight buttons.

Clear Data

Removes data from the portal without changing the portal in any other way.

Set Text Color

Brings up a dialog box which allows you to choose a new color for the text in the destination portal. This color change will be applied when the slide is viewed and the originating portal is pressed.

Scroll Data

Brings up a dialog box which allows you to set horizontal and vertical values for the distance (in pixels) you want to scroll the contents of the destination portal. Both positive and negative integers can be used. You can enter data in both the horizontal and vertical dialogs to achieve diagonal scrolling.

For best results portals containing scrolling text should not be transparent, while portals containing scrolling images will look best if the portal is transparent. It is also useful to put a solid color border around images that you wish to scroll

Stop

Stops a sound file that is playing in the destination portal

Play

Plays a sound file that has been placed in the destination portal

Loop

Continuously plays a sound file that has been placed in the destination portal. When the file ends, the loop function starts playing it from the beginning.

Next Frame

Places the next frame of an image sequence in the destination portal. This only functions if an image sequence has already been placed in the destination portal either by an ActionLink or from the Place Image Sequence function of the Content menu.

Previous Frame

Places the previous frame of an image sequence in the destination portal. This only functions if an image sequence has already been placed in the destination portal either by an ActionLink or from the Place Image Sequence function of the Content menu.

Portal

The eleven items in the Portal menu affect the behavior of the destination portal, but do not alter it's content.

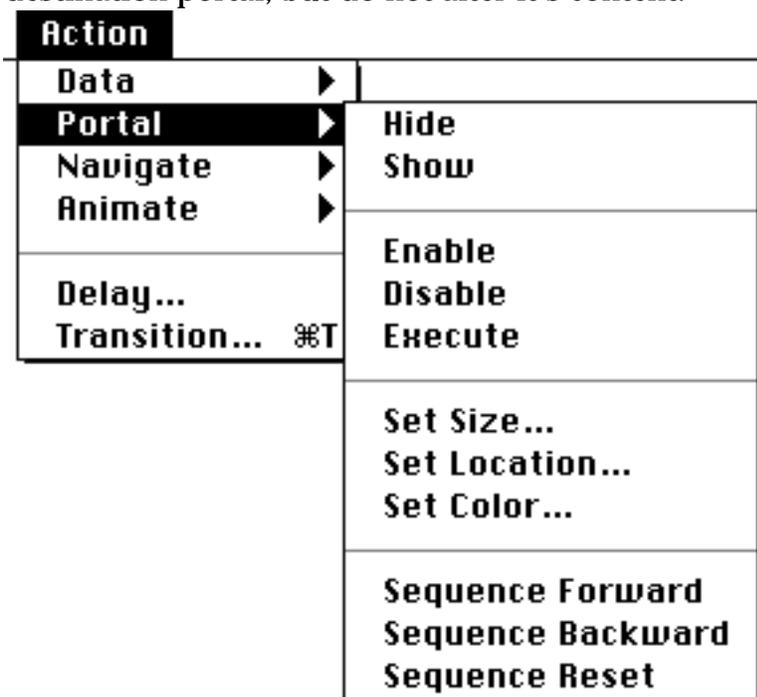


Figure 21. - Data submenu

Hide Portal

Hides a portal. Hidden portals cannot display data or play sounds. Hidden portals cannot initiate actions when the user clicks them, but they can be activated by other buttons to which you have assigned the Execute command.

Show Portal

Shows a portal that was hidden either by a Hide portal link or by being hidden because it's portal attribute was set to not initially shown.

Enable/Disable

Enables or Disables the destination portal. Links originating in portals normally respond to mouse clicks. If a portal is Disabled, then links will not be active. A portal can be changed from its default state (enabled) to a disabled state with the link command "Disable". The portal can also be enabled again with a link using the Enable command. The Enable command makes these buttons respond to mouse clicks; the Disable command returns them to the

disabled state. Disabled portals do not respond to mouse clicks and do not respond to the Execute command.

Examples of use of this function: If you had a sequence portal which placed three images sequentially into another portal. If you wanted the viewer to only be able to view the three images through one cycle of button presses, you could create a link command that disabled the portal on the fourth press.

Execute

Automatically clicks another portal. This function is useful in setting up timed events by using the Execute command in conjunction with the Delay function which is described later in this chapter. It is also useful for creating one portal which initiates actions in several other portals.

Set Size

Brings up a portal geometry dialog box which allows you to set a new size for the destination portal. This command allows for dynamic resizing of portals while a slide is being viewed. You can either set a new portal size, or set the portals dimensions to change by a specified increment.

For example, To make the portal grow incrementally by 6 pixels, type in a 6 in both the vertical and horizontal data boxes, and check the “Change By” box. To make the portal shrink by 6 pixels, type in a -6 .

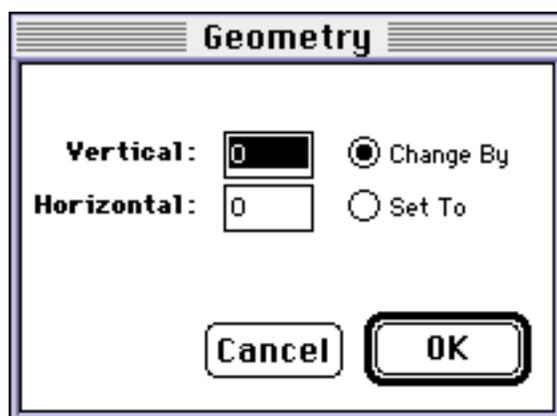


Figure 22. - Portal Size dialog box

Set Location

Brings up a portal geometry dialog box, like the one above. It allows you to change the location of the destination portal in one of two ways. You can either give it an exact set of horizontal and vertical coordinates, or you can change its location by a specified number of pixels. The position 0,0 is the top left corner of the slide. This command allows for dynamic relocation of portals while a slide is being viewed.

Set Color

Brings up a portal color dialog which allows you to change the color of the destination portal. This command allows for the dynamic adjustment of portal color while a slide is being viewed.

Sequence Forward, Sequence Backward, Sequence Reset

By default, a button with the Sequence behavior executes its links in order from the current link to the last—for example, a portal with three links executes link 1, then link 2, then link 3. Sequence commands let you control the order in which a portal with the Sequence behavior executes its links.

The Sequence Backward command reverses the order the links are executed—for example, link 3, then 2, then 1. To use this command, add another button, draw a button link between it and the button with the Sequence behavior, then assign the link the Sequence Backward command (see following illustration). When you click the new button, it reverses the order the button with the Sequence behavior will execute its links the next time it is clicked.

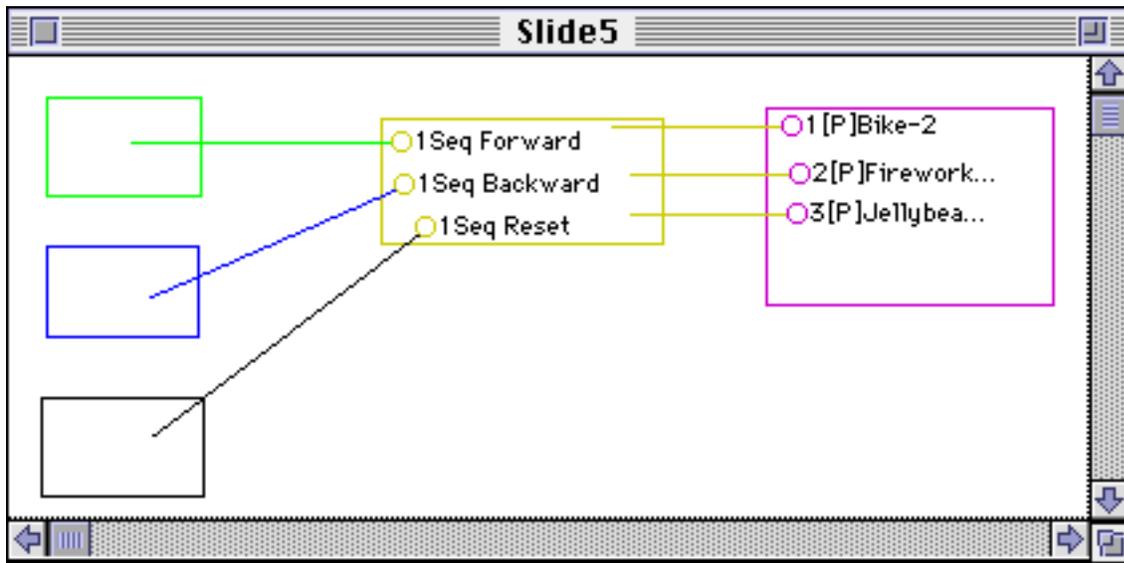


Figure 23. - Sequence command usage

To return the order of execution to the default direction (forward), add another button and assign its link the Sequence Forward command. (You don't need a Sequence Forward button unless you have a Sequence Backward button.)

The Sequence Reset command lets you start a sequence from the beginning, regardless of which link was executed the last time the user clicked the Sequence button. (The "beginning" is the first link if the sequence is forward, or the last link if the sequence is backward.)

Navigate

The Navigate command brings up a dialog box which lets you assign an absolute or relative URL to a portal. When the originating portal is clicked, the browser will take you to the specified URL. This link does not need to terminate in a destination portal, but can terminate on the background of the slide or within the originating portal.

Start Animation

The Start Animation command brings up the animation dialog box. This dialog allows you to create an animation path for the destination portal, and it allows you to set animation speed and the cycle frequency for any

ImageSequence contained within the destination portal. The dialog box is shown below.

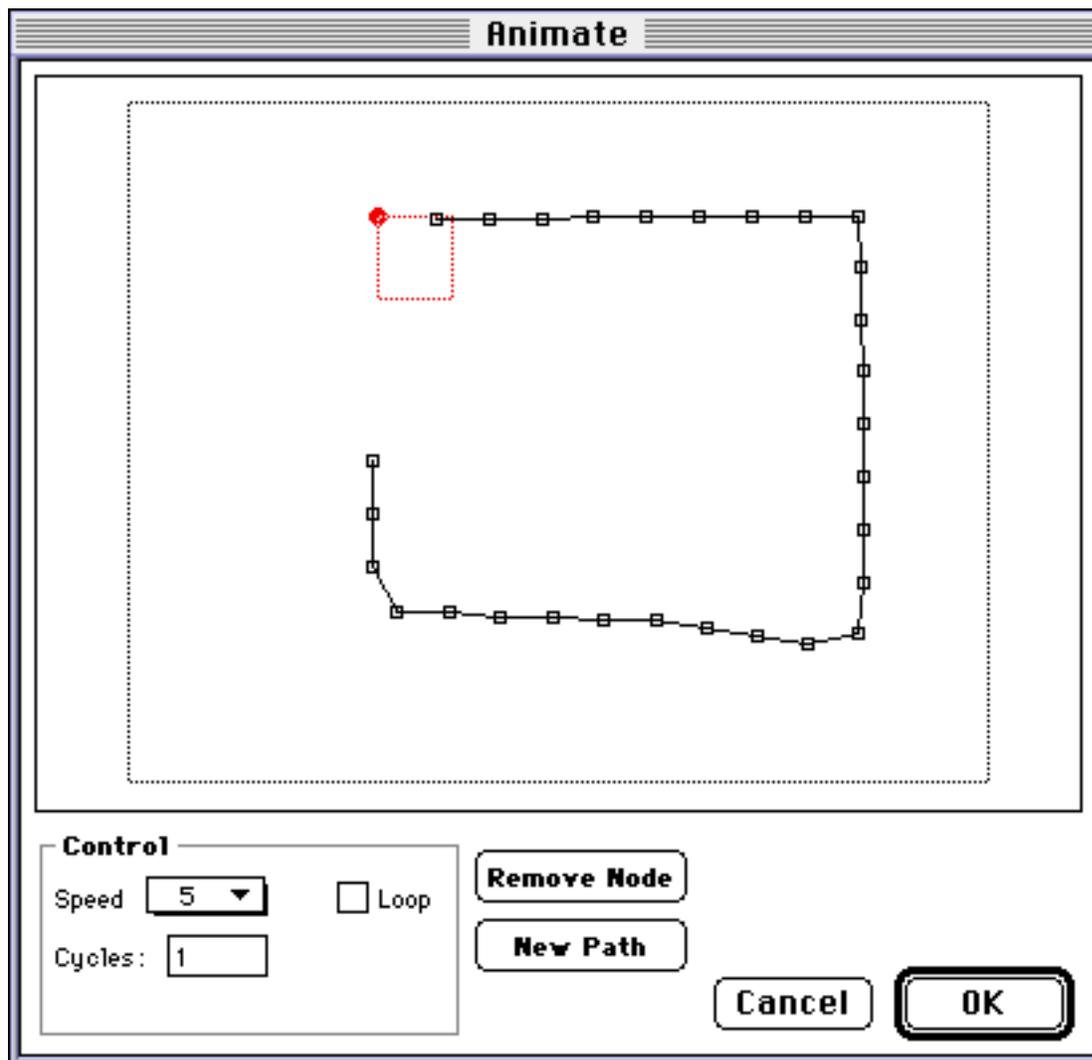


Figure 24. - Animation dialog with animation path and nodes

The red dot at the top left corner of the red portal represents the destination portal. Using your mouse you can create an animation path around the slide, including a path which goes off the slide in either the horizontal or vertical dimension. As you create the path, a series of evenly spaced "nodes" will be created. Once a path is created, you can edit the position of the nodes by selecting them with the mouse and dragging them to a new location. You can also remove selected nodes, one at a time, by

pressing the “remove node” button and you can add nodes in between existing nodes, by clicking the mouse between the nodes..

An animation path can have one or more nodes. If an image sequence is placed in the destination portal, the image sequence will cycle through all images as the portal traverses the path you have drawn. If the cycles box is set to 1, the image sequence will play one complete cycle across the path. If the cycle box is set to an integer, N, the sequence will repeat itself N times as it traverses the path.

The speed of progression across the path is set using the speed control. A value of 10 is the fastest speed, and 1 is the slowest speed. The portal progresses at a uniform rate between nodes. By removing nodes you can accelerate the animation, and by adding nodes you can reduce the acceleration. Checking the “loop” box causes the portal to traverse the path continuously until the “Stop Animation” or “Pause/Continue” command is invoked.

NOTE: Animation paths should not be drawn over other portals as the animation path will overwrite the underlying portals.

Stop Animation

This command stops the animation of the destination portal

Pause/Continue Animation

This command causes an animation in the destination portal to stop when the originating portal is pressed the first time, and causes the animation to resume when the originating portal is pressed a second time.

Delay

Delays can be assigned in conjunction with any other Action. With an action selected, you can add a delay, which brings up the Delay dialog box. This allows you to set a time interval before the assigned action is performed. Time intervals can be set in seconds or milliseconds, depending on which radio button is selected. You can also have an action repeated multiple times by setting a value in the “Repeat” box. The delay command is reflected in the ActionLink tag.

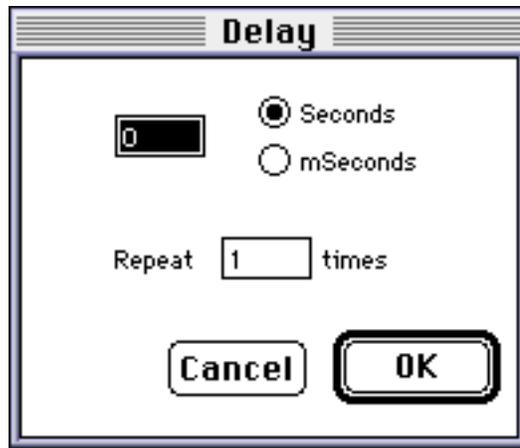


Figure 25. - Delay dialog box

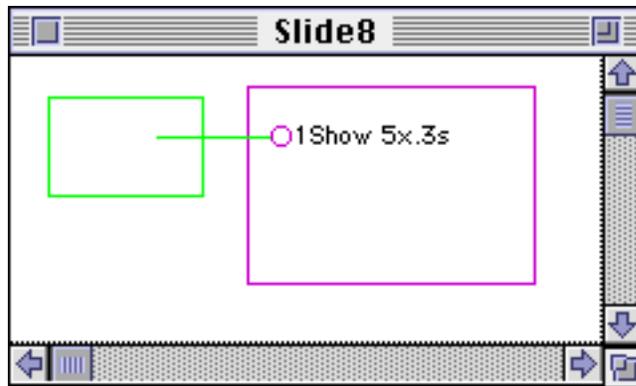


Figure 26. - Delay link- 5 times at 3 second intervals

Delays are extremely useful in setting up automatic presentations which display selected elements of a slide on a predetermined timing cycle, much like a kiosk. ActionLine is designed so that an ActionLink can be automatically executed when the slide first appears in the browser. To do this, you need to create an execute link that starts from the slide background, and terminates in a portal which will trigger the first event on your slide. An example is shown below:

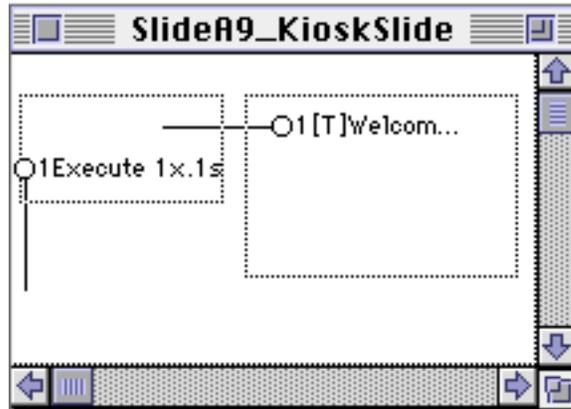


Figure 27. - Self Running Slide (Kiosk) will show the “Welcome” message 1 second after the slide appears

Transitions

Transitions can be assigned in conjunction with many other ActionLink commands. They provide a dynamic element to the display of text, images, image sequences, portal and text color changes, hide, show, clear and other effects. Selecting a transition brings up the transition dialog box. You can choose a transition type and transition speed. It is a good idea to experiment with different transitions and speeds.



Figure 28. - Transition dialog box

When a transition is assigned to an ActionLink, it is reflected in the ActionLink tag with an abbreviation denoting the transition type, and a numeral denoting the transition speed. In the example below, the Show command has been applied with the Transition “Wipe Top to Bottom” at a

speed of 5. You can also see that this ActionLink has a delay associated with it of 3 seconds, repeated 5 times.

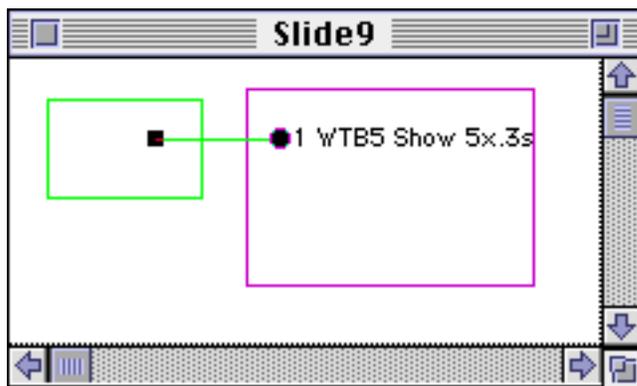


Figure 29. - ActionLink with transition tag

Arrange menu

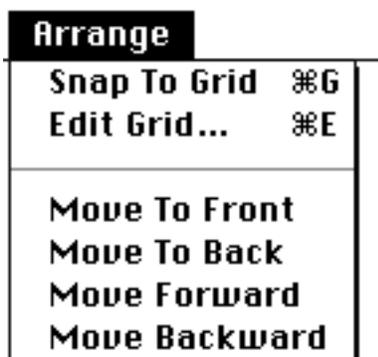


Figure 30. - Arrange Menu

The Arrange Menu allows you to change precisely position portals along the grid axis and it allows you to edit the grid spacing. In addition you can change the position of overlapping portals by moving them forward or backward.

Snap To Grid/Don't Snap To Grid

The grid is an array of evenly-spaced points. When you draw portals or lines with grid snap on, they are aligned with the grid points. If Snap to Grid is turned on, new portals will snap to the grid. Portals that are already created will snap to the grid if they are dragged with the selection tool. If an existing portal is moved using the arrow keys, it will not snap to the grid.

Edit Grid

Brings up a dialog box that allows you to set the grid spacing. **ActionLine** will preserve any changes in the Grid spacing until new values are entered.

Move to Front

Makes the selected portal the top layer of the slide.

Every portal is drawn on its own layer of the slide; the slide itself always remains the bottom layer. When you create a new portal, **ActionLine** puts the portal on a new layer and arranges that new layer on top of all the existing layers. If portals overlap, the portal on the top layer obscures the portals underneath (unless the top portal is transparent).

Portals are layered on the slide from front to back, in the order in which they were created. The first portal created is farthest back, while the most recent portal created is in the front. The relative front to back position of portals can be adjusted using this command and the three related commands, **Move Forward**, **Move Backward** and **Move to Back**.

Move to Back

Makes the selected portal the next-to-bottom layer of the slide (the slide itself is the bottom layer).

Move Forward

Moves the selected portal one layer closer to the top layer of the slide.

Move Backward

Moves the selected portal one layer closer to the bottom layer of the slide.

NOTE: If you move a portal forward (or backward) and it does not move relative to the overlapping portal, it is because there is an intervening layer on a different part of the slide. Apply the command again until you get the effect you want.

Display menu

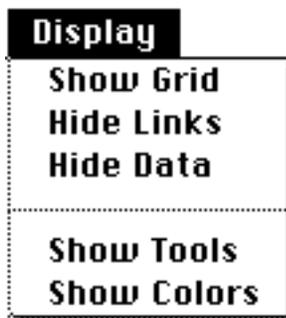


Figure 31. - Display menu

The Display menu allows you to change what is shown on your screen by hiding ActionLinks, data or both. It also allows you to display a grid, which allows for more precise placement of portals and lines on your slide. It can aid in more efficient slide creation and editing

Show Grid

Displays a grid on your slide to allow for more precise placement of portals and lines. The grid only appears in the Editor, and will not be shown on your final slide. The Grid coordinates can be changed using the "Edit Grid" command in the Arrange menu.

Hide Links/Show Links

Shows or hides the ActionLinks on your slide. If the ActionLinks are currently shown, the "Hide Links" option will appear in the menu. If the links are not currently shown, the "Show Links" option will appear..

Hide Data/Show Data

Shows or hides the Data within portals on your slide. If the Data is currently shown, the "Hide Data" option will appear in the menu. If the Data is not currently shown, the "Show Data" option will appear..

Hide Tools/Show Tools and Hide Color/Show Color

Hides the Tool palette or Color Pallette if it is currently showing. If it is not shown, then the "Show " option will appear. When selected it will show the respective palette.

4. Tips and Tricks

This chapter will provide some useful ideas for working more effectively with **ActionLine**. As with many software tools, there are often multiple ways to achieve a particular result. This is certainly true for **ActionLine**. While we have illustrated some useful methods to accomplish things, you should bear in mind that there you may find a better way to achieve the results you want. Don't be shy about trying out and experimenting with the wide array of **ActionLine** functions and commands.

1. File Formats

As we have described in the preceding sections the **ActionLine** Editor and Viewer use different file formats for graphics and sound than the JavaViewer. Table 1. details the specific file formats supported. It is important to make sure that all files are converted to appropriate format when you want to run your applets. Both commercial, shareware and freeware tools are available for doing all of these file conversions. Many of them are listed on our web site.

File Type	ActionLine Editor & Viewer	JavaViewer
Images	Gif, JPEG, PICT and Photo CD	Gif and JPEG
Sound	AIFF	au

Table 1. File Format Requirements

2. Text Handling within Java and the ActionLine Editor

As you know, your Macintosh supports a wide variety of fonts. However, in preparing Java applets for the web, you are limited to only five font types supported at present by Java. These fonts are: Helvetica, Times Roman, Courier, Symbol and Dialog. If you use a different font when you generate text in the **ActionLine** Editor, Java will substitute a font. Each browser implements fonts somewhat differently, so you always need to view your final slides in a browser to make sure you are getting the result you intended. In addition, because each browser handles fonts slightly differently, it is a

good idea to allow some extra space in your portals for font resizing. Otherwise some of your text may be clipped when it is viewed in a browser.

Word wrapping in Java. When creating text in your **ActionLine** Editor, you must insert carriage returns whenever you want a new line to start. The word wrapping you see in your portals will only be implemented in the **JavaViewer** if there is a hard line break. Otherwise you may have unexpected results with your text.

3. File names

It is important to remember that Java and your web browser are more restrictive than your Macintosh in handling file names. Avoid spaces and special characters in file names. It is best to use only alphanumeric characters in file names that will be used in creating your applets. This applies not only to the name of your applet, but to all files including images, sounds and image sequences.

4. Efficient creation of portals.

If you are going to be needing multiple portals with the same image and same attributes, such as buttons, it is easier to create one portal, enter the graphic and set the portal attributes, and then **Copy** and **Paste** this portal to replicate it. You can also **Copy** and **Paste** portals and **ActionLinks** within a slide and between slides.

When placing images in portals, and when using **ActionLinks** to place an image, you can use the Macintosh Drag and Drop capability to drag the appropriate image or sound. You can also drag text into a portal, although you cannot drag text to a link.

5. Drag and Drop

ActionLine supports Apple Drag and Drop technology. You can place images, sound files or text into portals by simply dragging them. You can also drag images onto **ActionLinks**. You can also drag portals containing links and data from one **ActionLine** slide to another. This is a very efficient way to create and save frequently used images and actions. You can not drag text

files onto ActionLinks. You can also paste images, and text into ActionLine slides from the clipboard. If you paste an image, when you use the Build Java Release function, the pasted image will appear in the Images folder with the name Image 1, Image 2 etc. It is important to make sure these images are in a format that the JavaViewer can utilize.

ActionLinks and Portals can be copied and pasted within slides and between slides, making it easy to duplicate portions of a slide, without having to recreate it from scratch.

6. Adding Tiled Backgrounds to your slide

ActionLine allows you to add tiles backgrounds to your slides. These will only appear in your web browser, not in the ActionLine Viewer. To add a tiled background to your slide, you will have to insert the following into your HTML page, just above the parameters defining your applet. Insert the following code:

```
<param name=Tile value="Yourtilename">
```

Where you substitute the name of your tile file for "Yourtilename"

7. More about the HTML page generated by the Build Java Release function

After you have completed building you slide, and select the Build Java Release command from the File menu, ActionLine generates a folder containing you applet, folders with the appropriate Image, ImageSequence and Sound Files, and an HTML page which can be used in your web browser. Here is a look at a sample of a typical HTML page generated by ActionLine. For purposes of discusson we have numbered the 6 lines of text. These numbers will not appear in your HTML code.

```
#1. <applet code=CActionLineApp.class width=483 height=383>  
#2. <param name=DocumentFile value=Slide1>  
#3. <param name=ImageFolder value="Images">  
#4. <param name=ImageSequenceFolder value="ImageSequences">  
#5. <param name=SoundFolder value="Sounds">  
#6. </applet>
```

Line 1 specifies the width and height that you chose for your slide.
Line 2 identifies the name of your applet, in this case "Slide1"
Line 3 specifies the name of the file containing your images
Line 4 specifies the name of the folder containing you Image sequence folders.
Line 5 specifies the name of your folder cotaining your sound files.
Line 6 is the end of applet command.

ActionLine uses the default file names shown above in lines 3, 4 and 5. If you have chosen different names for any of these folders, you need to manually change these names on the HTML page that contains your applet.

Again it is important to remember that no file names, folder names, or applet names used on your web server may contain spaces or other characters not supported by Unix.

8. Keyboard Shortcuts Sorted by Keystroke and by Function

Sorted by Keystroke

Key Combination	Function
<input type="checkbox"/> -A	Select All
<input type="checkbox"/> -C	Copy
<input type="checkbox"/> -D	Get Data Info
<input type="checkbox"/> -E	Edit Grid
<input type="checkbox"/> -G	Snap to Grid
<input type="checkbox"/> -I	Get Portal/Line Info
<input type="checkbox"/> -N	New
<input type="checkbox"/> -O	Open
<input type="checkbox"/> -P	Preview Slide
<input type="checkbox"/> -Q	Quit
<input type="checkbox"/> -S	Save
<input type="checkbox"/> -T	Transition Menu
<input type="checkbox"/> -V	Paste
<input type="checkbox"/> -X	Cut
<input type="checkbox"/> -Z	Undo

Sorted by Function

Function	Key Combination
Copy	<input type="checkbox"/> -C
Cut	<input type="checkbox"/> -X
GridEdit	<input type="checkbox"/> -E
Get Data Info	<input type="checkbox"/> -D
Get Portal/Line Info	<input type="checkbox"/> -I
New	<input type="checkbox"/> -N
Open	<input type="checkbox"/> -O
Paste	<input type="checkbox"/> -V
Preview Slide	<input type="checkbox"/> -P
Quit	<input type="checkbox"/> -Q
Save	<input type="checkbox"/> -S
Select All	<input type="checkbox"/> -A
Snap to Grid	<input type="checkbox"/> -G
Transition Menu	<input type="checkbox"/> -T
Undo	<input type="checkbox"/> -Z

9. A summary of Portal Properties

Portal Attributes

Attribute	Options
Shape	Portals can be rectangles with square corners,.
Size	Portals can be one-pixel square to the size of the entire slide. To change a portal's size, drag its handles. To change the size of slides choose Get Slide Info from the Content menu.
Position	You can position a portal anywhere on the slide. You cannot move portals off the slide.
Visibility	Portals can be visible (shown) or invisible (hidden). You can select ActionLinks that select either state.
Layers	Every portal is created on its own layer. You can arrange the portal layers in any order by choosing commands from the Arrange menu. When you create a portal, it is the top layer. The slide, itself, is the bottom layer.
Background color	The fill color of the portal is the current background color. The slide background color is white when the slide is created. You can change either color by selecting the Get Portal or Get Slide Info from the Content menu.
Foreground color	The foreground color, which applies to text and lines, is black when the slide is created. You can change the color by selecting Get Data Info or Get Portal/Line Info from the Content menu
Frame	You can add a colored frame around the portal. You can set this by selecting Get Portal Info from the Content menu.
Data	A portal can contain data: pictures, sound, text or color.
ActionLinks	ActionLinks define the action that occurs when the portal is clicked.
Portal behaviors	Portal behaviors define how a portal behaves when it first appears in a Slide and when a user clicks it—for example, whether it is a time trigger or whether multiple links from a portal are executed with a single click or on successive clicks.

10. Self-running slides and kiosks

On page 43 we began a discussion of using delays to create self-running slides or kiosks. ActionLine treats the background of the slide as a portal. Any ActionLink that is drawn from the background into another portal will execute the ActionLink function when the slide first appears, and whenever the person viewing the slide clicks on the background of the slide.

Automatic presentations

If you want a slide to start displaying its contents automatically when it first appears, but you do not want it to execute the link when the background is clicked, you can create the following structure.

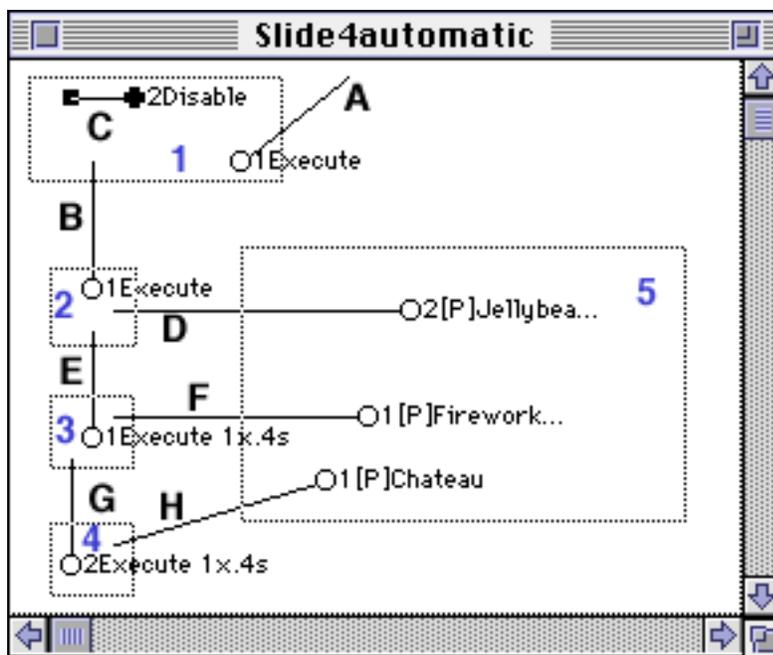


Figure 32. - Automatic slide presentation

Link A starts from the background of the slide and terminates in Portal #1. The link is assigned an execute command which occurs when the slide first appears. The execute command acts on portal #1 to activate links B and C. Link B acts on portal # 2 to activate link D, which places the Jellybeans picture in portal #5 and it activates link E which delays 4 seconds and then activates link F to place the Fireworks picture in Portal #5. Link C disables portal #1 so subsequent mouse clicks on the slide background do not have any affect on the rest of the chain. Links G and H function to place a 3rd image, the Chateua picture in portal 5 after an addition 4 seconds delay.

A completely self running slide, or series of slides can be constructed in this manner. To bring up another slide, one needs to contract a link to a portal that use the navigation function to link to another HTML page with another ActionLine applet.

11. Scrolling-making images and text look their best.

The ability to scroll data and images within an ActionLine slide provides a lot of interesting possibilities for attractive special effect. For example, rolling credits can easily be created just by trying text into a portal, and then setting up appropriate vertical or horizontal scrolling buttons. Another useful application is the ability to pan across a large image in both the horizontal and vertical dimension. When using the scrolling feature of ActionLine it is useful to pay attention to the transparency property of the the portal containing the data. Text scrolls most effectively in a portal that is not transparent. Images scroll most effectively if the portal is transparent. Transparency is determined by the checkbox in the Portal Attributes dialog box (p. 25). When images are scrolled, it is useful to have a solid color border around the image. The border width should be slightly wider than the scrolling increment, i.e. if you are scrolling in 10 pixel increments, use a border that is at least 12 pixels wide.

12. Transitions

Transitions can be applied to most button actions, such as Place Text, Place File, Place Sequence , Set Text Color, Clear Data, Set Color (Portal Color). Transitions can also be applied to Hide and Show if the portal contains an image or a sequence, but not if it contains no data. If you are unsure which commands can have an associated transition, it best to experiment on your own.

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