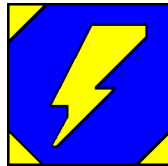# ActionLine™

Getting Started
version 1.1.2

➡**Installation**
➡**Tutorial**
➡**Tips and Tricks**

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Table of Contents

1.   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 buttons 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.

This **Getting Started** manual will take you through the process of creating several applets. It will also provide a quick and easy introduction to using the key features of **ActionLine**. To learn more about what you can do with **ActionLine** you will want to either experiment on your own, or read the accompanying **ActionLine Reference Manual**.

2.　　　　　Installation

　　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 1.
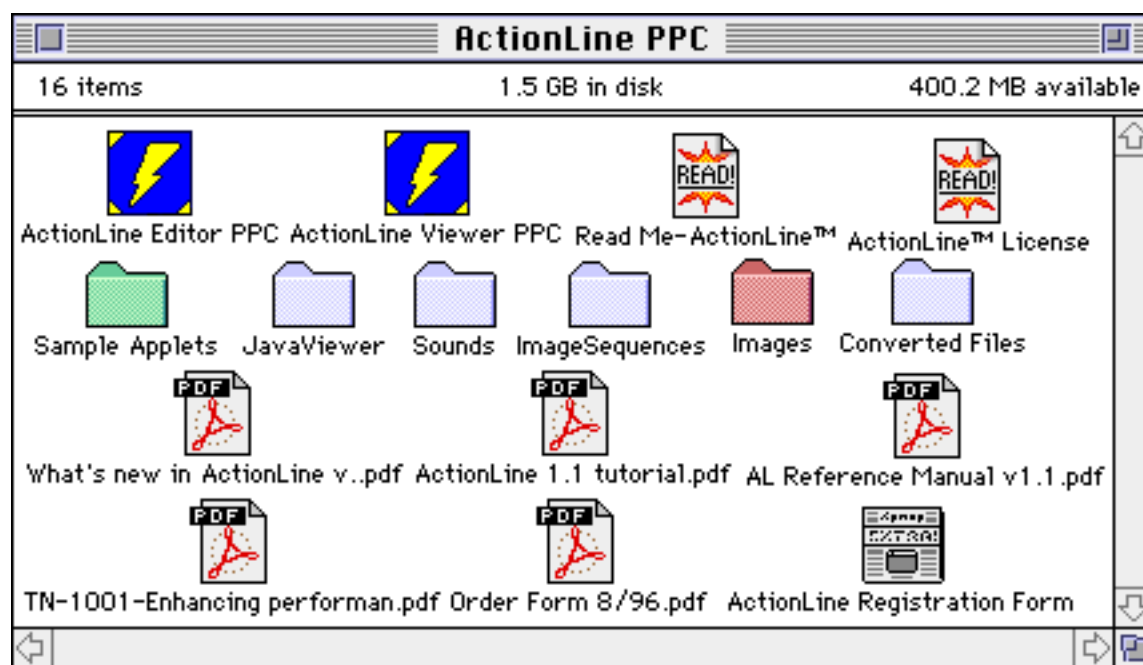

Figure 1.- ActionLine Folder Contents

　　To use **ActionLine** you will need a Macintosh based system with at least 5 Mb of RAM memory, and 10 Mb of hard disk space. You will also need to be running Macintosh system 7.1 or higher and have QuickTime™ version 2.5 or higher installed.

　　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

3.   Creating your first Java™ applet

To get started, open your **ActionLine** folder and locate the icon called **ActionLine Editor** (either the 68K or PPC version, depending on the version you ordered). The 68K version will run on any Macintosh compatible system and the PPC version will only run on computers which contain a PowerPC processor.

Open the **ActionLine Editor** either by double-clicking it, or choosing **Open** from the **File Menu.** You will get a dialog box asking you to put in your name and serial number. After doing this, you will have a screen similar to that in Figure 2.
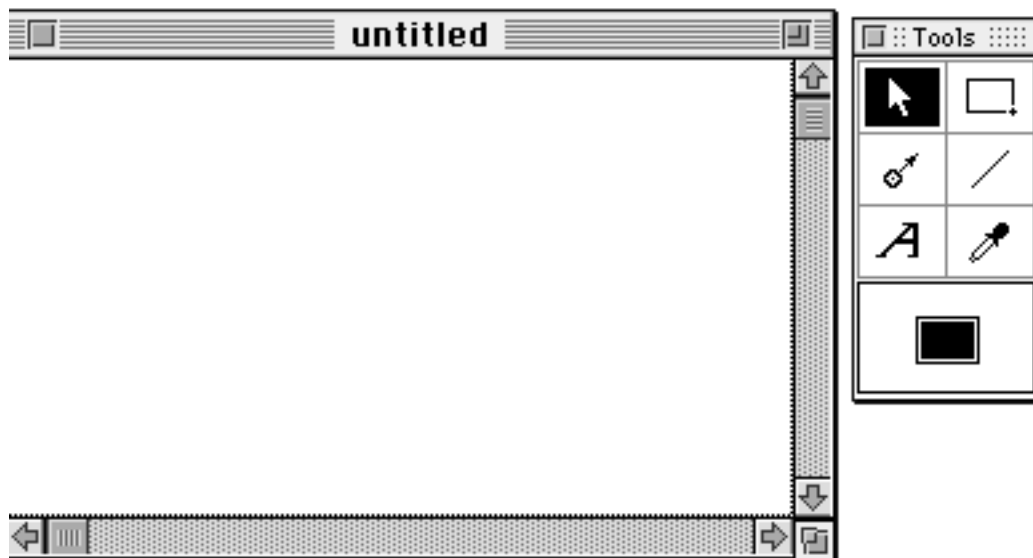

Figure 2. - Initial Slide

1. *Drawing Portals on your Slide*

In **ActionLine** you will be creating an interactive **Slide**. You will use the **Tool Bar**, shown in Figure 3, 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 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.

In the course of this manual we will use portals for many of these purposes. Let's create our first series of **Portals**.
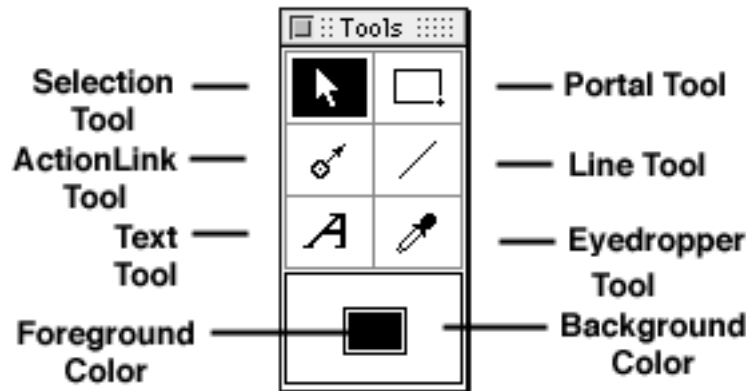

Figure 3.-Tool Palette

Go to the **Arrange Menu** and make sure the first line reads "**Snap to Grid**". If it says "**Don't Snap to Grid**", click on it and it will switch to "**Snap to Grid**". With this function selected, it will be easier to create portals of uniform size and it will make positioning the portals easier.

Click on the **Portal Tool** in the **Tool Palette** and draw eight portals similar to those shown in Figure 4. Your portals will not have numbers-we have added numbers for purposes of discussion and illustration only. Your portals do not have to be exactly identical to those shown in Figure 4, but try to achieve something similar in composition and arrangement. If you need help in arranging your Portals, you can go to the **Display Menu** and select **Show Grid**, which will allow you to move and space your portals more accurately.

To move a **Portal** you have already created, choose the **Selection Tool**, click on the **Portal**, and drag it to the location you want it to be in. You can also move a selected **Portal** with the arrow keys. To remove a **Portal**, select it, and press the delete key on your keyboard.

After you have created your Portals, **Save** your slide. Go to the **File Menu** and select **Save**. You will be asked to enter a name for your slide. Type in "MySlide1" and click the **Save** button.
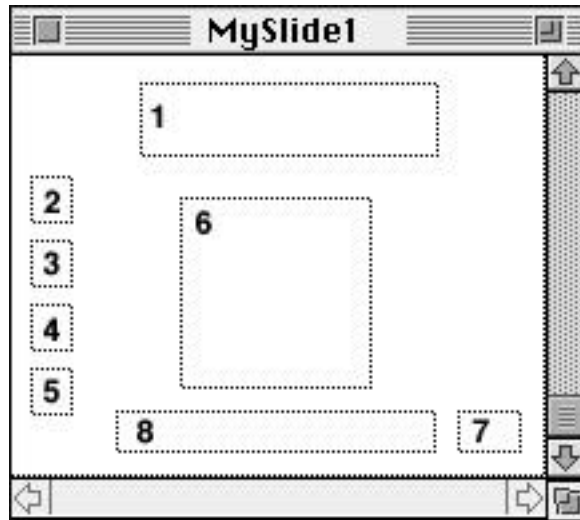
➡ **It is a good idea to Save your work often**.

Figure 4. - Slide with Portals

2. *Putting Text and Images in your Portals*

Adding text to portals is easy. Simply select the **Text Tool** from the **Tool Palette** and click on Portal #1. Type in "Welcome to My Show" To set the font properties, choose **Get Data Info** from the **Content Menu**. A dialog box will come up allowing you to choose a font, font size, style and color. Choose Helvetica **18** for the font, and choose Bold for the style, the press "OK". Do not choose a text color yet.

Add images to portals #2, 3, 4, 5 and 7. Choose the **Selection Tool**, click on Portal #2 and select **Place Data** from the **Content Menu**. This will bring up a dialog box which will allow you to choose an image file. Navigate to the Images folder within you ActionLine folder. Choose the image called "-1btn.blusq20x20" and click the "Open" button. This will place a small blue button, with yellow borders inside your portal. If your portal is too large, resize it using the selection tool. Place the same image in portals 3, 4 and 5. You could also have used the Drag and Drop feature of the Macintosh to drag the image file into your portal. Select portal # 7 and place the image called "NEXTredright" in it.

➡ **Save your work again!**

3. Creating Interactive Buttons with ActionLinks

You are now going to make your portals into dynamic, interactive buttons, that will initiate a variety of actions when the person viewing your slide clicks on it. Interactive effects are accomplished using the **ActionLink Tool** to connect two portals. The portal which the link starts in becomes a button. The portal which the link ends in becomes the location in which the action will take place. This will become clearer as we create the first few links.

4 Creating Interactive Links with the ActionLink Tool

Select the **ActionLink Tool** from the **Tool Palette**. Draw a link which starts in portal # 2 and ends in portal # 1. With the link still selected (as evidenced by the two black squares at either end of the link), go to the **Action Menu** and from the sub-menus within it, choose **Portal** and **Set Color.** As shown in Figure 5.

Action Arrange Display

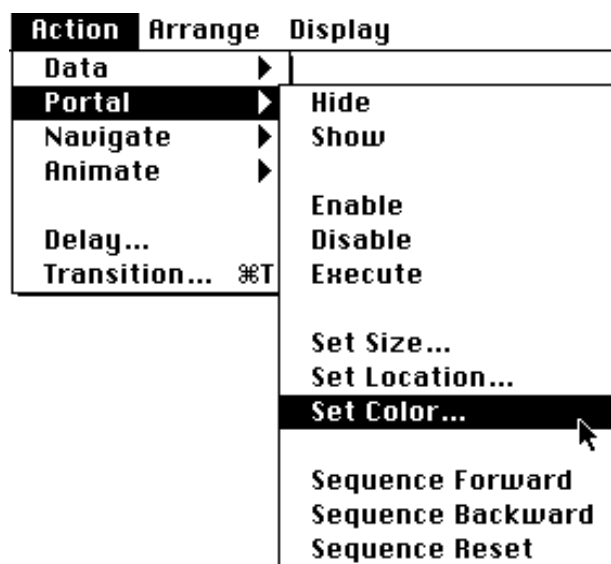| Data ▶ |
Portal ▶	Hide
Navigate ▶	Show
Animate ▶	
	Enable
Delay...	Disable
Transition... ⌘T	Execute
	Set Size...
	Set Location...
	Set Color...
	Sequence Forward
	Sequence Backward
	Sequence Reset

Figure 5 - Set Portal Dialog

A dialog box will come up, with the **Color Picker** which will allow you to choose a background color for the portal. Pick a bright yellow. This color will appear in the background when the slide is run and button 2 is pressed.

Apply a **Transition** to the color, by selecting the **Transition Menu** which appears as a sub-menu in the **Action Menu**. You will get a dialog box illustrated in Figure 6. Choose the transition called "Left To Right Wipe". Select a transition speed of 8, and click the "OK" button.

Figure 6. - Transition Dialog box

Now continue to build more links. Use the **ActionLink Tool** to draw a link from port #3 to portal #1. From the **Action Menu** choose **Data** and **Set Text Color**. Another dialog box will come up allowing you to choose a color for the text. Select a dark blue color and click the "OK" button. Also select a Transition for the text color.

Add a link from portal #4 to portal #6. From the **Action Menu** select **Data** and then choose the **Place File** sub-menu. Now navigate to your Images folder and choose the picture titled "Jellybeans" and click the" OK button" Choose a transition for this image.
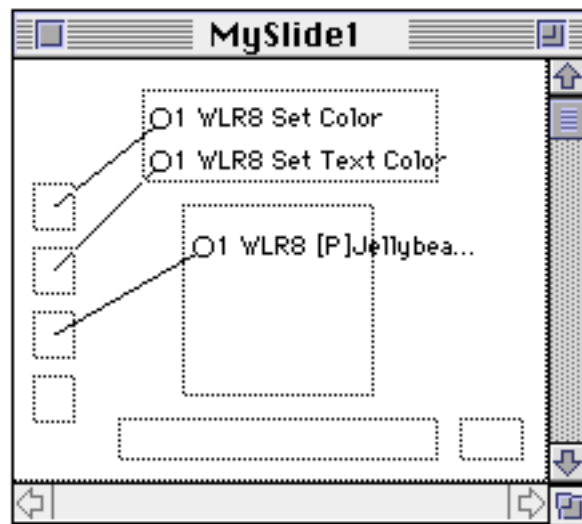

Figure 7. - Slide with 3 Links

When you are done, your slide should look like Figure 7.
➡ **Save** your Slide.

5. Links as Blueprints of Interaction

Each link conveys important information about the interaction you have specified. This is useful as you go back to make revisions to your slide. Here is a brief description of what the links tell you. Look at the topmost link in Figure 7. It reads "1 WLR8 Set Color" The number 1 specifies this as the first link created in portal #2. Portals can have multiple links coming out of them, but in this example there is only one. Subsequent links would have the number 2, 3, etc. The letters "WLR" specify a transition, namely WipeLeftRight. Each transition has a unique abbreviation. The number "8" specifies the speed you chose for the transition, namely speed 8. The final part of the link, "Set Color" specifies the link action, namely Set Background Color. After you have worked with ActionLine for a little while, you will recognize all the links. You can select a link at any time, and change it's properties. You can also delete a link by selecting it with the **Selection Tool** and pressing the delete key on your keyboard. Links and portals may be copied and pasted within or between slides.

If your slide gets too busy with links and graphics, you can hide one or both items by going to the Display Menu and **Hiding** or **Showing** the Links or Data.

6. Completing and Viewing your first slide

To complete your slide, add a link from portal # 5 to portal #8 and choose "**Place Text**" **from** the **Data** sub-menu of the **Action Menu.** This will bring up a dialog box, into which you can type "Interaction Now!" After entering this text, click the **Text Attrs**... button to assign a font, size and color to the text. Choose Helvetica, 12 point, bold, and a dark color of your choosing. You may also apply a transition to the text after you click the "OK" button in the Text dialog box.

Draw an **ActionLink** from portal #7 to any empty region of your slide. In the **Action Menu** choose "**Navigate**" and select Go to URL... A dialog box will

come up. Type in "MySlide2.html". This navigation button will take you to a new web page, containing your second Java applet, which we will create later.

➡ **Save** your Slide.

To Preview what you have created, select **Preview Slide** from the **File Menu**. This will launch the **ActionLine Viewer**. The preview will give you a representation of what your slide will look like in a browser, but it is not an absolute representation of what you will see. Each browser will display your slide somewhat differently. In the Tips and Tricks section of this manual we will give you some ideas on how to make your slides look best in a browser. Also, the **ActionLine Viewer** cannot show the navigation functions, since these only occur when you are looking at your slides in a browser. While the **ActionLine Viewer** is a very useful tool for getting a quick look at what you have created, it is important to view your finished slides in a browser to get a complete sense of how they will appear. You should also be aware that different browsers implement Java somewhat differently, so you may get a different look on one browser than you will on another.

7. Adding Background Colors to Slides and Portals

As you viewed your slide, you noticed that the background of the slide is white as are all the portals that do not contain images. It is possible to set the colors of the slide background and the portal backgrounds. To set the **Slide Background** select **Set Slide Info** from the **Content Menu**. A dialog box will come up with a color picker. Do not change the slide size, but select a dark blue color for the slide background. Then click the "OK" button.

To set a **Portal Color** select portal #6 with the selection tool, and either double click on the portal, or choose **Get Portal/Line Info** from the **Content Menu**. You will get the dialog box illustrated in Figure 8.
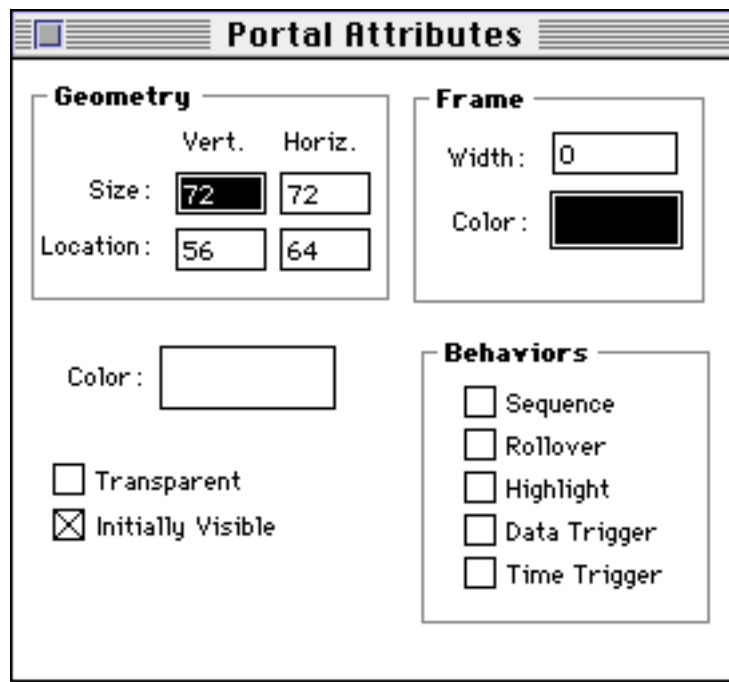
Figure 8 - Portal Attributes Dialog Box

To place a frame around the portal, set the Frame Width to 4 (pixels) and choose a red color from the color selector in the Frame section of the dialog box. When you have a frame color you like, press the "OK" button. Now choose a portal color from the Color Selection box in the lower left region of the Portal Attributes Dialog. Choose a dark blue color, click the "OK" button and close the dialog box by clicking in the close box in the top left corner of the dialog box. This will set both the frame and background colors.

➡ **Save** your Slide.

4. Preparing slides for your server

Now that you have created your first slide, you are ready to prepare it for viewing in your browser and for placement on your server. **ActionLine** helps make this process easy.

1. Building your folder for placement on your server

Make sure your slide called **MySlide1** is open in your **ActionLine Editor**. From the **File Menu** choose **Build Java Release**. A new folder will be created on your computer, called **MySlide1 Java**. The folder will contain three items; 1. a copy of your ActionLine Document titled **MySlide1**,   2. A folder called **Images**, and 3. a web html document called **MySlide1.html**.

2. Converting images for use on the web

Inside your **MySlide1 Java** folder is a folder called Images. This folder contains copies of all images used to build your slide. This folder will be placed on your server, but first you must convert the images to the graphics formats supported by the web, namely Gif or JPEG. The original images you used to create your slide were either Gif, JPEG, PICT or Photo CD™ images. The PICT images in this Java folder must be converted to either JPEG or Gif. The conversion can be done by many image conversion programs, including Adobe PhotoShop, DeBabelizer™ or freeware or shareware such as clip2gif or GIFConverter. We provide links to many of this utilities from our web site at <http://www.imcinfo.com>.

For purposes of this tutorial, we have already done the conversions for you. You will find the proper files in a folder called "Converted Images"inside your ActionLine™ Folder. Simply open this folder, and drag the images into the Images Folder in your **MySlide1 Java** folder.

3. Adding the JavaViewer

Open the folder called JavaViewer which is inside your ActionLine Folder. Copy the contents of this folder (not the folder itself) into your

MySlide1 Java folder. Your MySlide1 Java Folder should look like Figure 9.
The icons on documents may be different on your computer. You can open
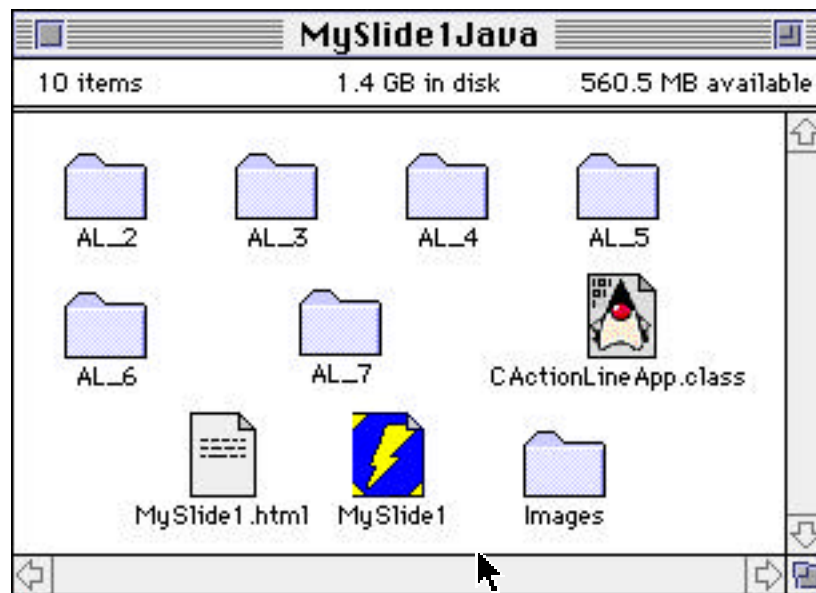the html document in any text editor or web authoring tool.

Figure 9. - Completed folder

4. Viewing your applet in your browser

You can view your slide in your browser by dragging the file
MySlide1.html to your browser. If you wish to make changes in your applet,
simply open it in your ActionLine Editor, make the changes and save a copy
to your MySlide1Java folder.

5. Adding the applet and associated files to your server

You can now add the applet to your server. **You must copy the entire
contents of the MySlide1 Java Folder to the folder on your server that
contains your html index page**.

➡ **If these files and folders are posted to a different level on your server, they
will not run properly**.
➡ **Remember, copy the <u>contents</u> of the folder, not the folder itself**.

If you wish to have your applet run within an existing web page, simply open the **MySlide1 Java.html** document, copy the following text, and place it in your own html page, somewhere between the <BODY> and </BODY> tags.

      <applet code=CActionLineApp.class width=200 height=160>
      <param name=DocumentFile value=MySlide1>

      <param name=ImageFolder value="Images">
      <param name=ImageSequenceFolder value="ImageSequences">
      <param name=SoundFolder value="Sounds">

      </applet>

6. File naming conventions-avoiding problems on the web

It is important to remember that the names of files used when creating the applet in the ActionLine Editor, and the files that appear on the server, must match exactly. Otherwise the JavaViewer will not be able to locate the proper file, and you will generate an error.

File naming conventions for the JavaViewer are also more restrictive than on the Macintosh. It is best to avoid any spaces in file names, and special characters, such as the # and / symbol.. It is best to use only the alphanumeric keys to name files. If your applet cannot locate a file, check carefully that the names match exactly between the Editor and the JavaViewer, and that no unusual characters are used.

5. Adding more features to your slides

In this section we are going to create a new slide that uses more of the features of **ActionLine**, including image sequences, animation, sequence attributes and rollover buttons. Image sequences are a series of two or more images that **ActionLine** will display in order. Each image sequence that you use is kept in its own folder, inside the **ImageSequences Folder**. Image sequences are used for both animations and for rollover and highlight buttons. In the case of buttons, there are only two images per sequence. For animations, you can have two or more images.

Create a new slide, with a series of portals identical to your first slide. You can do this either by creating an entirely new slide from scratch, or by selecting your first slide and choosing **Duplicate** from the **File Menu**. If you duplicated the first slide, name the new one **MySlide2**. If you duplicated the original slide, use the selection tool to select and delete all the **ActionLinks**. We will be using the same buttons in portals 2, 3, 4 and 5 that we used in the first slide.

1. Using Image Sequences and Rollover buttons

If you created this slide by duplicating it, the images will already be selected. If you created it from scratch, place the images in the same manner you used as in Chapter 3. Select Portal 1 with the **Text Tool** and type **My Show**-**Continued!** Select portal #7 and choose **Place Image Sequence** from the **Content Menu.** When the file selection dialog box appears, select the ImageSequences folder inside your **ActionLine**™ folder. Click on the folder named **Nextbuttons** and press the "Select Nextbuttons" buttons as shown in Figure 10. This will place the image sequence in portal #7. Now double-click on portal 7, and the portal attributes dialog will come up. It will look like Figure 8. Check the "Rollover" checkbox. This will specify that when a mouse is on top of portal #7, the image will switch from the first image in the Nextbuttons sequence to the second image.
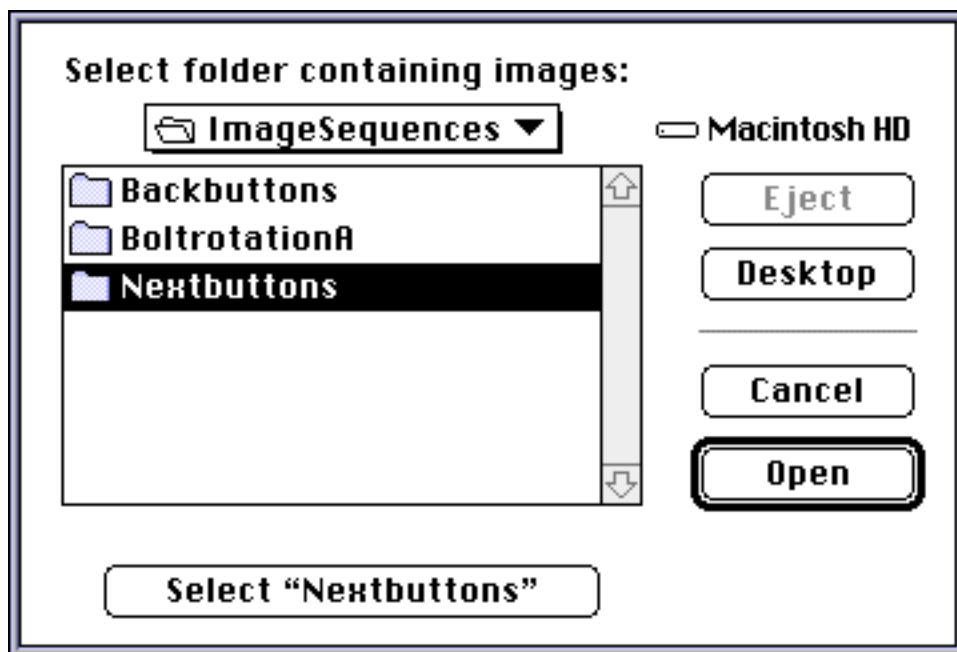
Figure 10. - Choosing an Image Sequence

Now choose portal #6, and choose the **Place Image Sequence** from the **Content Menu**. This time select the image sequence called **BoltrotationA.** Using the Selection Tool, resize the portal to the size of the lightning bolt image. **Save** your new slide.

2. Animation

Draw an **ActionLink** from portal #2 to portal #6. Choose **Start Animation** from the **Action Menu**. A dialog box will come up as shown in Figure 11. Set the speed to 7 and click the "OK" button. This will make button 2 start the image sequence when it is clicked.

Now draw a link from portal #3 to portal #6. Again choose **Start Animation.** This time we are going to create an animation path. Start by moving your mouse to the red dot in the top left corner of the rectangle representing portal #6. Hold down the mouse and draw a path similar to that shown in Figure 12. Set the Speed to **8** and the Cycles to **5**. Speed determines how fast the image sequence will play, and the Cycles setting determines how many time the entire image sequence will play as it traverses the path. Nodes can also be selected and moved, if you want to change the path. The portal

will traverse the path at a uniform rate from node to node. If you select individual nodes and remove them, the portal will speed up over the area of the missing node. This will allow you to have your animation accelerate and decelerate as it traverses the path.
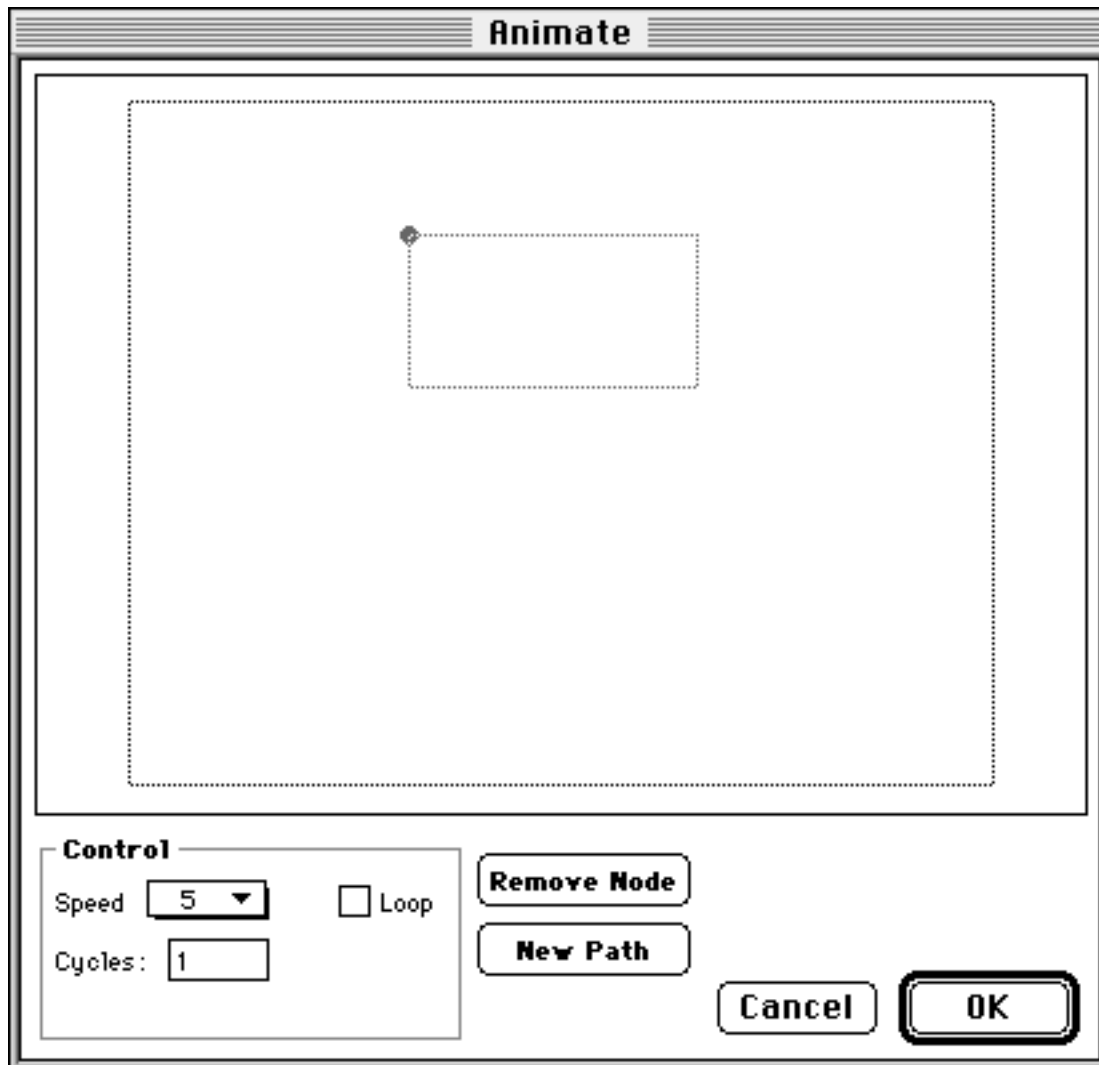
➡ **Save** your Slide.
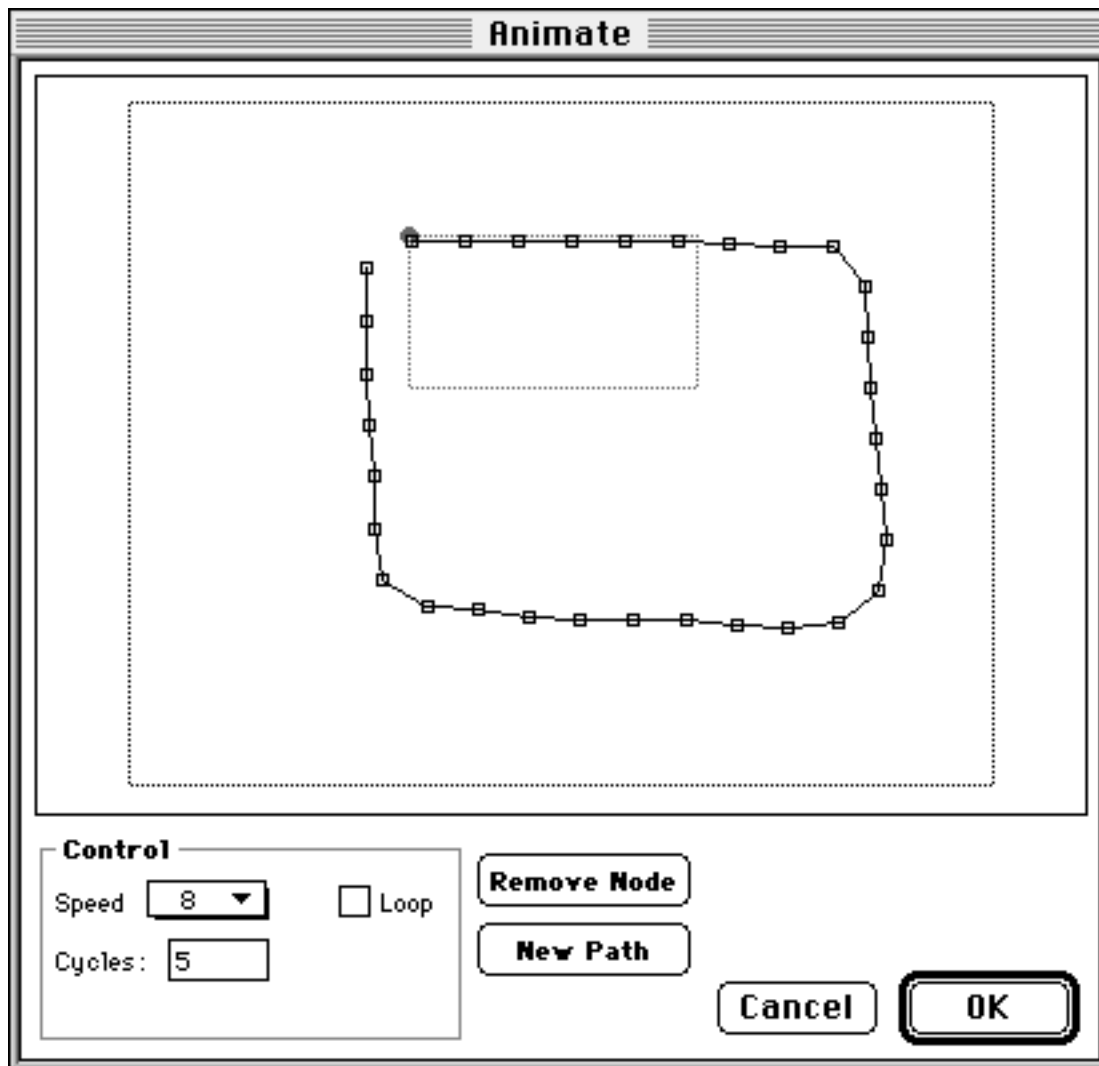

Figure 11. - Animation Dialog

Figure 12- Animation path

3. Sequence buttons

Draw a link from portal # 4 to portal #6. From the **Action Menu** choose **Place File** and select the file in the Images folder called "USFlag-button". Apply a transition of your choice and set the speed to 7. Draw another link from portal #4 to portal #6. Place another image, called "Lighthouse. Give it a transition and a speed of 7. Double click on portal #4 until you get the **Portal Attributes** dialog box. In the **Behaviors** section select the attribute called "**Sequence**". This tells the viewer that when portal #4 is pressed the first time, it should put the USFlag image in portal #6. If portal #4 is pressed again, it will place the Lighthouse image. Using sequence buttons you can

display an entire slide show, or a combination of images and text, depending on the type of links you create.

Draw a link from portal # 5 to portal #8 and choose the **Place Text** from the **Action Menu**. Type the message, "That's all folks!". Choose a font size of 12 and a bright color, using the **Text Attributes** dialog.

➡ **Save** your Slide.

As the last item for this slide, Draw an **ActionLink** from portal #7 to any empty region of your slide. In the **Action Menu** choose "**Navigate**" and select Go to URL... A dialog box will come up. Type in "MySlide1.html".

➡ **Save** your Slide.

Preview your slide using the **Preview Slide** command in the **File Menu**. If you want to make changes to your slide, go back into the editor and make them. Otherwise, Build your Java Release as you did in Chapter 4. We have provided the converted images and imagesequences you need for this slide as well. Simply drag them from the "Converted Images Folder" to the matching folders in your **MySlide2 Java** Folder.

It would be a good idea to combine your Java folders in the following way. Since the Java Folder for MySlide1 already contains the JavaViewer components, and an Images Folder, Simply drag all converted images into the Images Folder. Also move the ImageSequences Folder from the Converted Images folder to your MySlide1 Java Folder. Also move the MySlide2.html document into the MySlide1 Java Folder. When you are done, your folder should look something like Figure 12. You should now be able to test your 2 html pages by dragging them to your browser.
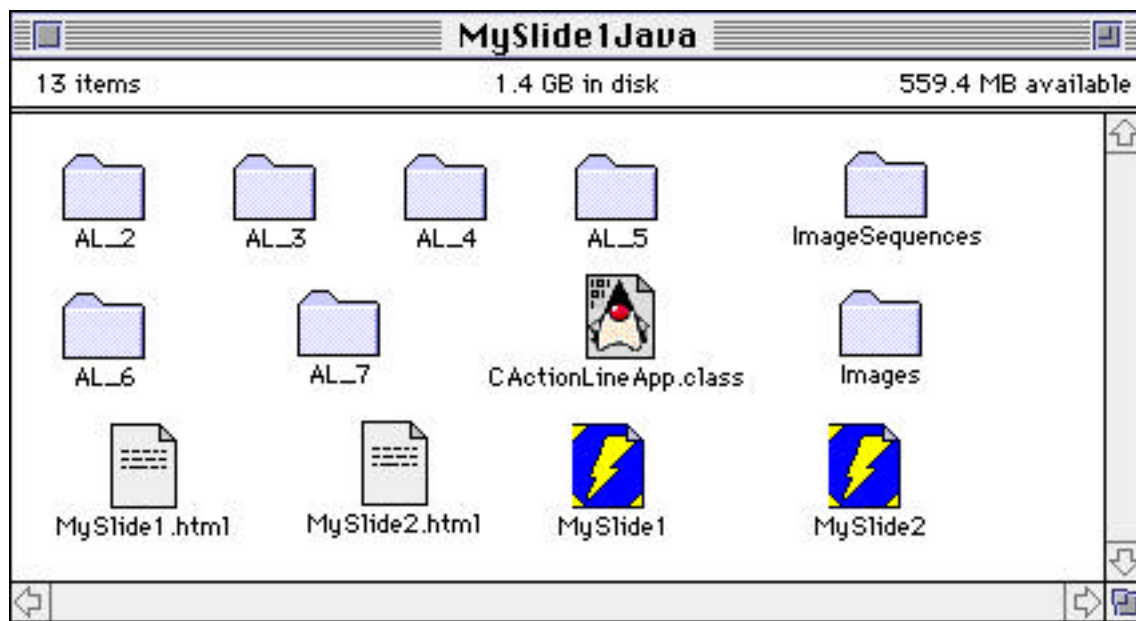
Figure 12 - Combined folder for browser testing

4. *Summary*

If you have worked your way through this manual, you should have a good understanding of the basic operation of **ActionLine**. You can go on to explore other features and functions of the product by simply experimenting on your own, or you can consult the **Reference Manual** for a full listing of all of the features of the product.

Please visit our web site often, as we continually provide new tips, tricks and examples of **ActionLine** at work.

6.   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.

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

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 work 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 you 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.