

Court Recorder 6.0

USER GUIDE



About This Manual

This manual covers the features of the SoniClear Court Recorder digital recording software product.

SoniClear Court Recorder makes digital recording as straightforward and efficient as possible. It is important to review the instructions provided in this User Guide to reduce the risk of losing audio information. You should not use Court Recorder for critical recording work until you have become familiar operation of the software and have tested the software and hardware configuration thoroughly.

Court Recorder is a very reliable product that has been carefully tested, and customers have used software based on the Court Recorder technology for many years. However, because of the complexity of recording using a Windows computer system, there is a slight possibility of the recording system failing. For that reason, it is essential that you use backup recording equipment to ensure 100% reliability.

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Getting Started

Overview

Court Recorder is software-based system for digitally recording legal proceedings, including court sessions, depositions and administrative hearings. The software is ideal for supporting the work of court reporters and transcriptionists, as well as providing reliable, high quality recording for archival purposes.

The Court Recorder software includes the Court Recorder program for recording and file management, and the Transcriber Live program for live monitoring, readbacks, and transcribing.

Key features of Court Recorder include:

- Powerful and Easy to Use
 - Includes all of the features required by court reporters.
 - Easy to use as a tape recorder, making it suitable for use by judges and administrators.
- Multichannel Recording:
 - Up to 12-channel recording in situations that require multiple discrete channels (to improve audio clarity and assist in speaker identification).
- Hardware Configuration
 - Runs on all Windows XP computers and Windows Vista computers that have fully functioning audio device drivers.
 - Incorporates the latest professional digital audio equipment for the highest recording quality.
 - Uses industry-standard WAV and MP3 file formats.
- Confidence Monitoring
 - Listen to recorded audio from disk drive while recording via headphones.
 - Visual indication showing recording status and levels.
 - Low audio level indicator with automatic time of failure notation.
- Readback
 - Play back from the recording while recording continues.
 - Keyword search to locate desired readback location.
 - Preview of readback location on headphones.
 - On/Off control of all room speakers from the program.
 - Automatic annotation of time and channel where readback occurred.
- Two Level Recording Backup Option
 - Feed all channels of audio into backup recorder as stereo mix.
 - Independent recording device for second level backup.
- Fast Note Taking
 - Type at any time to enter timestamped notes.
 - 24 predefined Marker notes.
- Advanced Transcriber

- Play back Court Recorder dual-channel and multi-channel recordings.
- Full transcription capabilities available for files still in process of being recorded.
- Channel selection during playback, with toggle using foot pedal.
- VoiceBoost audio enhancement for listening to hard to hear dialog.
- Slow down and speed up playback without changing the pitch of the voice.
- Optional hardware foot pedal works just like transcription machines.
- “Virtual” foot pedal simulated using keystrokes.
- File Management
 - Record directly to WAV or MP3 format.
 - Convert files recorded in WAV format to MP3 format for electronic transmission to transcriptionists and reduced storage overhead.
 - Extract sections of recording to send to judges, lawyers, transcribers, clients, and others.
 - Archive recordings in MP3 format with SoniClear Player included for playback of multi-channel recordings.

Court Recorder Installation

Court Recorder runs on a standard Windows computer (laptop or desktop). Microphones or sound system audio sources are fed into the computer using an audio interface device. The recorded audio data is stored on the disk drive of the computer that is running the program.

If the Court Recorder software was supplied pre-installed on a computer, setup will have been performed before delivery. If software is being installed on user-supplied equipment, consult the Court Recorder Installation Guide, which covers installation and maintenance of the computer and audio hardware components.

Various options for how the program works are set in the Edit/Preferences dialog. The default values are suitable for simple uses of the program. More advanced uses, such as exporting files or special audio hardware configurations, may require changing the settings. See *Editing Program Preferences* for more details.

Technical Support

Contact your Court Recorder dealer or view the SoniClear Support Page at www.soniclear.com for technical support information.

Court Recorder Operation

Court Recorder consists of two separate programs: Court Recorder for recording and Transcriber Live for taking notes, readbacks, and transcribing. Both programs use a standard Windows GUI interface for intuitive operation. In many respects the program looks and works much like a conventional tape recorder. The controls allow the user to operate the recording and playback process.

In addition to tape-recorder-like buttons, additional features are available from from pulldown menu selections. These will display popup dialogs prompting the user for the required actions, such as file selection.

Recording with Court Recorder

Start the Court Recorder computer. After the computer finishes booting up, plug in the audio interface (USB or Firewire connector). It usually takes 10-20 seconds for the audio device to register with the computer.

When the audio interface has completed connection, start the Court Recorder program. You can start Court Recorder from the SoniClear program icon on the desktop. Alternatively, use the Windows Start button (such as Start/All Programs/SoniClear60/SoniClear).

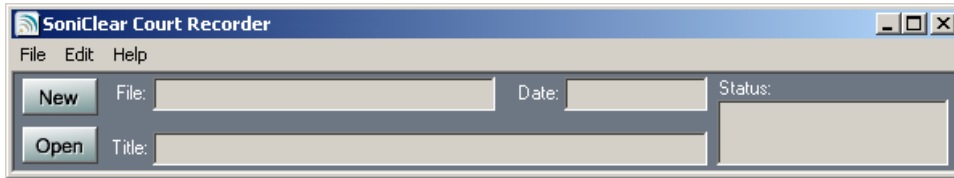
When using Court Recorder for recording, you will need to be sure that no other programs are running on the computer, such as email clients, web browsers, fax receiving programs, and system resource monitors. This is because Court Recorder needs all of the computer's resources while making a recording. Running other programs at the same time as recording can cause clicking or other distortion in the recording, as well as a variety of other problems. The exception to this rule is the use of programs, such as voice recognition, designed to complement the recording process. For such programs, the computer must be tested to ensure that it has been properly configured and has the requisite processing capabilities to keep both programs running smoothly.

Important Note: reboot the computer after it has been in "sleep" mode or hibernated. Laptops that have been suspended will not always resume correctly for recording audio from the external USB or Firewire interface device. In addition, the computer will slowly consume system resources over time, resulting in system problems if it is not rebooted regularly.

Recording sound files takes a large amount of disk space, so be sure that the computer has adequate space available. Disk space requirements for recording are discussed in the Court Recorder Installation Guide.

Initial Main Window Display

When Court Recorder starts, it displays the following screen:



The program is controlled like any Windows program, by clicking on display buttons and using the pulldown menus.

Creating a New File

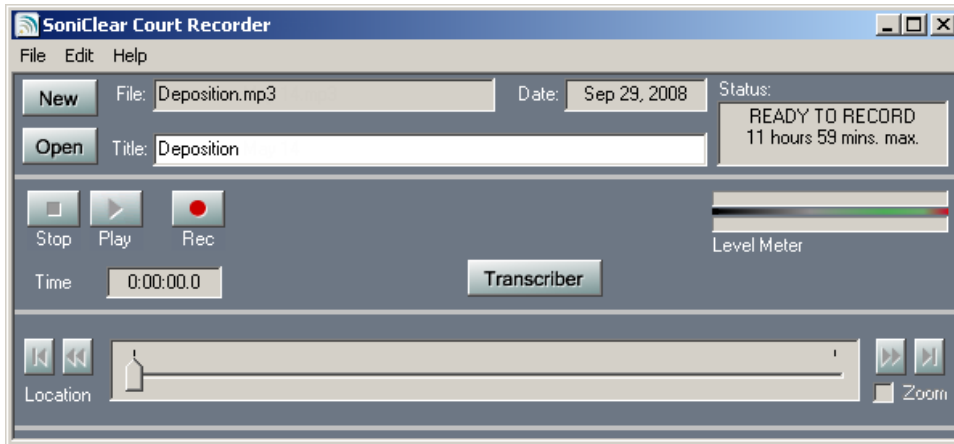
To make a new recording, press the New button. This will display a popup dialog showing the default file type and accepting input for a file name. The default file recording type depends on the how the program has been configured, such as 2-Channel or 8-Channel.

If you don't enter a name, the program will generate a default file name. The default name depends on the type of recording (such as "8-Channel.MP3", "4-Channel.wav", or "2-Channel.MP3"). A different default file name value can be specified by entering a file name "prefix" in the Files tab of the Preferences dialog.

The program automatically ensures that whatever name you enter, it will be unique. So, for example, the additional new files created without entering a specific file name would be named "8-Channel (2).mp3", "8-Channel (3).mp3", and so forth. The Recording Options tab of the Preferences dialog determines the default type of file created.

NOTE: if you create a new file but do not start recording, the empty file will automatically be deleted from the disk.

After creating a new file the display will change to look like this:



Start Recording

The new file is now ready for recording. Press the red Record button (“Rec”). When you are finished recording, press the Stop Recording button, which is to the left of the Record button.

The process of making a recording will produce an audio recording on the disk drive of the Court Recorder computer. There is no need for an additional "save" operation, as the data is already saved in the designated file.

The level meter is active when the program is recording. This can be used to determine proper setting of recording levels on the microphones, and to provide a visual confirmation that audio is being recorded. Adjust the microphone using volume knobs on the audio interface, the volume control panel supplied with the audio interface, or using the Windows Volume control panel. A thin color bar under the level meter indicates the correct recording level. For best results the level indicator should consistently show speaking in to the middle of the green display range. If the meter shows always at the maximum level (too high), or always at the minimum level (too low), an optimal recording will not be made and the transcriptionist may have difficulty producing an accurate transcript.

If the level meter does not move in response to talking this indicates the program is not receiving an audio signal. Generally this would happen if there is a problem with the microphone connection to the audio interface or the level is set too low. If the meters stay constantly at a single level, or move randomly, there is an electrical problem with the setup that must be corrected. Contact your dealer or SoniClear for assistance, or check the SoniClear Support Page at www.soniclear.com for diagnostic suggestions.

Stop Recording

To stop recording, click the Stop Recording button that is next to the red Record button. This requires confirmation so as to avoid accidentally stopping the recording. Recording will not stop until the moment you click the Yes button in the confirmation dialog. When you stop recording, an automatic note is entered that reads "Stop Recording".

Resuming Recording

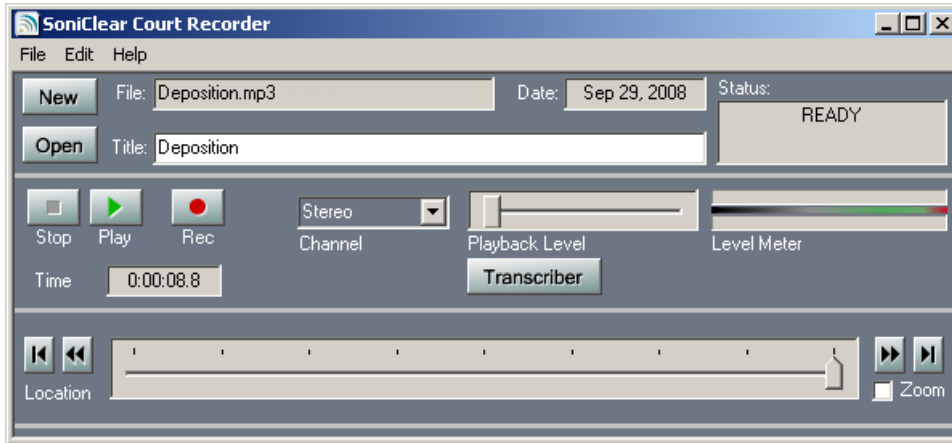
After pressing stop, it is possible to continue recording in the same file. Just press the Record button. The audio will automatically be appended to the end of the file. If you have closed and opened the file, a confirmation dialog will be displayed. Click Yes if you wish to record to the end of the file. Clicking No in this situation will cancel the recording action.

File Protection

There is no way to accidentally overwrite the recording. If you have closed the file, it is marked as "read-only" at the operating system level. When Court Recorder opens a read-only recording, it will not allow appending audio to the end of the file without a confirmation. Court Recorder allows for renaming read-only files, but will not delete such a file. To delete a recording after it has been closed (and marked read-only), you must use the file management tools in Windows to do so. Make sure that you delete both the WAV file and the corresponding BKM note file.

Playback in Court Recorder

Now that you have created a sound file, Court Recorder can play it back. Press the Play button to hear your recording. The playback display looks like this:



Court Recorder includes buttons and a slider for moving the playback position. Moving to the extreme left, for example will move the playback position to the beginning of the file. Moving the slider to the extreme right will move the playback position to the end of the file.

The Zoom check box allows for finer control over playback position on long recordings. When this is enabled, the display changes to show 60 seconds of time, with the slider positioned to the middle. Moving to the extreme left or right will move the playback position by 30 seconds and reset the slider to the middle. This makes it easier to move several minutes within a section of the recording. The Rewind to Beginning and Wind to End buttons can also be used to move by 30 seconds when in the Zoom mode. Unchecking the Zoom check box will return to displaying the entire recording timeline.

Click the Play button to play from the current position. When you press stop, the current position is set to the location in the sound file when you pressed stop. Pressing Play again will continue playing from that location.

Setting Playback Volume

In most cases, the playback volume for the selected channel can be controlled using the displayed volume control slider. For some systems, the playback volume will be controlled by hardware knobs, or by a control panel supplied with hardware device.

Check the hardware documentation or contact your technical support consultant for assistance.

The volume control will not be displayed in Court Recorder for some types of unsupported sound cards. In this case, the volume for playback through the computer speaker is set using the Windows Volume Control Panel. The default Windows Volume Control that is displayed when using an external audio interface is that for the external device, not the internal sound card that is being used to play the audio into the room. To display the correct panel for the computer speaker, follow these instructions:

- Double click on the speaker icon in the system tray. If the speaker icon is not visible:
 - Click the Start button and select Control Panel
 - Double click “Sounds and Audio Devices”.
 - Make sure the option “Place volume icon in the taskbar” is checked and click Apply.
 - The Volume icon should appear in the system tray of the taskbar. If this does not cause the speaker icon to be displayed, consult with technical support for the computer. In any case you will be able to select the Audio tab and click the Volume button to display it from this dialog.
- When the Volume Control dialog is displayed:
 - From the Options pulldown, select from the Properties command.
 - In the Mixer device control, select the sound card in your computer, and make sure the “Adjust volume for” control is set to Playback. This will display the system sound card playback Volume Control panel.
 - In the Volume Control panel, make sure that the Wave output is not muted and that the rest of the audio sources are muted.
 - The Wave and Volume Control sliders control the volume of the playback. Adjust to a suitable level.

Note: when using Court Recorder MX, the Speakers option plays through both the speaker and the headphones.

If you do not hear any sound played back, either there is a problem with the sound card configuration or settings, or the program was unable to record from the sound card. For a solution, review the computer setup in the Court Recorder Installation Guide.

Monitor Recording

While recording, the user can listen to the audio that has been stored on the disk drive. Clicking the Transcriber button to launch the TranscriberLive program. See below for instructions for using TranscriberLive.

Managing Files in Court Recorder

Court Recorder includes a number of advanced features for managing files that can be accessed from the File pulldown menu selections.

Create New Audio Recording File

The File/New menu selection includes the same features that are available from the New button.

Open Existing Audio Recording

Court Recorder can play back recordings by selecting the corresponding BKM file. This automatically opens the corresponding WAV or MP3 file. Court Recorder also supports opening the following file types directly (whether or not a BKM file exists):

- WAV
- MP3
- AU
- AIFF
- CF3 (SoniClear Conference format)

To select a file to open:

- Click the Open button or select File/Open from the pulldown menu.
- Select the type of file to open. The default type is BKM.
- Select the desired file and click Open. If a file is already open, it will be closed automatically before opening the selected file.

Open the Last Audio Recording File Used

The File/Open Last File menu selection opens the last file that was opened using Court Recorder. It also positions the playback pointer to where it was when the file was last open. This is useful for continuing transcription of a file after taking a break.

Close File

You can close the currently open file with this option.

Delete File

The File/Delete menu selection deletes the currently open file. The user must confirm the deletion.

Rename File

The File/Rename menu selection renames the current file to a new name. If the file is being saved to a new folder or drive, the file is copied with the new file name and the original file is deleted. There must be enough disk space for both copies of the file while the rename operation is being performed. The File/Rename menu selection is the same as the Rename button.

File Properties

The File/Properties menu selection displays the operating system file information and recording format information for the currently open file.

Make Backup

The File/Make Backup menu selection makes a backup copy of the currently open file. A new copy of the file is made, while leaving the open file as it is. After specifying the output file and folder, click Begin Backup. The files stored in the backup folder can be burned to CD or DVD for archival purposes using the CD burning software supplied with your computer.

Import from MP3 File

You can import files into Court Recorder that are stored in the standard MP3 file format. The import process converts an MP3 file into the WAV format, defaulting to the standard Court Recorder format (22K/16bit, mono or stereo, depending on the format of the MP3 file).

Import using the File/Import from MP3 pulldown menu item. The software will give you a dialog to select the file name. Enter the file name or leave the default choice, and then click Save. The Process Dialog will provide the option of performing VoiceBoost processing on the file being converted. Click the Begin Conversion button to start the import process.

If a BMK file of the same name as the MP3 file is found in the same folder, it will be copied to a BKM file of the same name as the WAV file generated in the import process.

Export to MP3 File

You can export recordings in the WAV file format to standard MP3 file format. Open the file to be converted and select File/Export to MP3 from the pulldown menu.

You will be prompted to select the desired MP3 file name. Then, in the Export to MP3 dialog, select the desired "codec" in the Output Format selection and choose the channels to be included in the output:

- Mono – combines the left and right channels into a mono output file.
- Stereo – creates a stereo file from the source file.
- Left – create a mono file using only the left channel of the source file.
- Right - create a mono file using only the right channel of the source file.
- All Channels – convert all channels to MP3.

When selecting Mono, Stereo, Left, or Right, the source audio is either the 2-Channel recording file, or the Stereo Mix file (for multi-channel recordings). In all cases, the BKM file is included in the output directory.

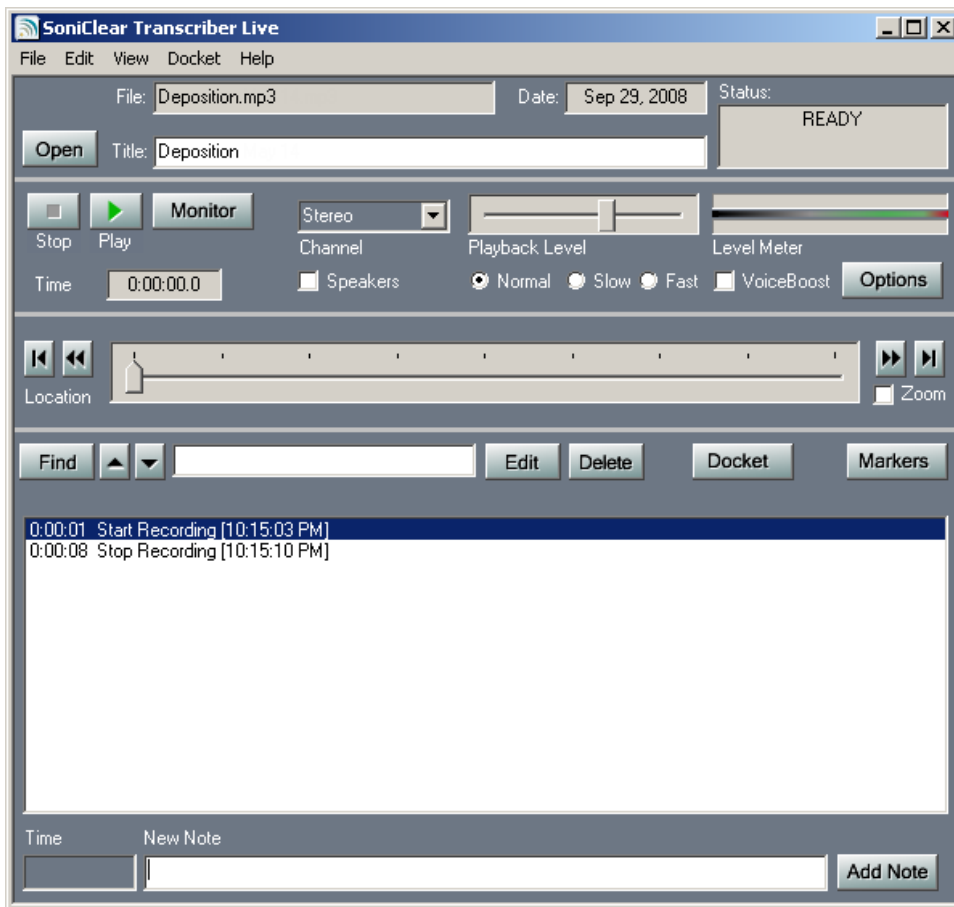
After entering the conversion information and parameters, click "Encode" to start the export process. Conversion will take a few seconds to a few minutes, depending on the file size and the speed of the computer. You can cancel conversion by pressing the Cancel button.

Using Transcriber Live While Recording

The Transcriber Live program is used to take notes, play readbacks while recording, and play the recording for transcribing (while recording or at a later time). Transcriber Live can be started from the Transcriber button in the Court Recorder program, from the Transcriber Live desktop icon, or from the Start menu.

Monitoring While Recording

After launching Transcriber Live from the Court Recorder program, the playback display looks like this:



Click the Monitor button to listen to the audio being recorded in the file. There will be approximately 3 seconds of delay between the when the sound is recorded and when it plays back in Monitor mode.

Playing While Recording

To play locations within the file while recording, set the current playback position to the desired location and click the Play button. Play mode can be used during recording:

- To review audio that has just been recorded
- For transcribing using the transcription features while recording continues
- To perform a readback of a section of the file while recording

Playing Readbacks

While recording, it is possible to play back portions of the recording through speakers.

If the Speakers check box is unchecked, the playback will be heard through the headphones only. This makes it easy to listen to the recording to determine if it is the correct section before playing through speakers.

If the Speakers check box is checked, audio will be heard through the room speaker. In addition, a note will automatically be added to the file indicating the time of the readback and the location of the file that was played through the speaker. This ensures that the transcriptionist will know when audio is being played as a readback, and is not the original occurrence of the speaking.

Playing Recordings After Recording Stops

When the recording process is stopped in Court Recorder, the Transcriber Live program will automatically stop Monitor mode playback, if it is active at that time. After the recording process ends the Monitor button will give an error message when pressed, indicating that the file is not being recorded.

Playback when recording is stopped will behave exactly the same way as when opening a file at a later time, even if it is still open in the Court Recorder program. All of the transcription features are available.

See *Using Transcriber Live for Transcribing* below for more details about the features available in the program while playing recordings.

Opening an Existing File for Playback

Transcriber Live can play back recordings created using Court Recorder. Press the Open button and select the desired file. If a file is already open, it will be closed automatically. If the file that is opened is currently being recorded, the program will automatically detect that fact and enable the monitoring features of the program.

Positioning Playback Using the Location Slider

SoniClear includes buttons and a slider for moving the playback position. When the Zoom check box is unchecked (the default setting), the location slider represents the entire file. Moving the slider will move to the playback position in the file to the relative location represented by the slider. The left end of the slider is the beginning of the file and the right end is the end of the file.

The Zoom check box allows for finer control over playback position on long recordings. When Zoom is enabled, the display changes to show 60 seconds of time, with the slider positioned to the middle. Moving to the extreme left or right will move the playback position by 30 seconds and reset the slider to the middle. This makes it easier to move several minutes within a section of the recording. The Rewind to Beginning and Wind to End buttons can also be used to move by 30 seconds when in the Zoom mode. Unchecking the Zoom check box will return to displaying the entire recording timeline.

Taking Notes While Recording

Transcriber Live provides several ways to enter notes into a recording for use later:

- Type a note in the New Note field and press Enter (Return key)
- Click “Add Marker to Notes” in Marker window
- Press a Function Key to add a Marker
- Click “Add Item to Notes” in the Docket window
- Press “Add Next Docket Item” switch on optional USB Foot Pedal
- Press virtual foot pedal keystroke

Any of these methods can be used for entering notes during playback as well. In that case, the timestamp entered includes only the relative time in the file, but not the “wall clock” time from the computer system clock.

When notes are entered in Transcriber Live while the file is being recorded, the notes will always be added at the end of the file. When recording is stopped, notes will be added at the current playback location.

Type New Notes

While recording, notes can be entered into the file at any time by typing in the New Note field. The timestamp for the note is automatically added from the recording time counter and the computer system clock at the time that the first letter of the note is typed. That way you can take as long as you need typing the note, but the time will be remembered from the point in time when you started typing. Pressing Enter without typing any letters will enter a blank note.

The cursor must be in the New Note field at the bottom of the main window. If the cursor is not in the New Note field, you can move it to that field by either clicking on the field with the mouse, or pressing Ctrl-Enter (control key held down while pressing the Enter key). Then start typing the note.

Add Markers as a Note

A Marker can be added to the notes by pressing one of the 24 function keys (F1 through F12 and Shift-F1 through Shift-F12). The default action of a Marker is to enter the marker by itself in a note. Markers can also be defined like text macro speed entry keys. In that usage, pressing the Marker function key appends the text into the current New Note field. See the section below, “Using Predefined Markers”.

Add Docket Items as a Note

By pressing the Add Docket Item foot pedal key (normally the Control-Semicolon key), the currently highlighted docket item will be entered as a new note with the timestamp of when the note was entered. The current docket item is advanced to the next item automatically. This allows you to simply add each docket item in sequence for court sessions that do not alter the event order from that shown in the docket. You can manually change the order by clicking on the individual docket items displayed and clicking Add Docket Item.

Edit Notes

Notes can be edited at any time. Click on the note title shown in the list. Then click the Edit button. This will bring up the Edit Note dialog. You can change the note type (number 1-9), the note title, and the note details. When editing during playback, you can also use the start and stop buttons to check for the correct time position of the note. The timestamp of the note can be moved to a new time by entering a new value in the time field. The time can also be modified by clicking the forward and reverse buttons next to the play button. This moves the time forward or backward by one-second increments.

Delete Notes

You can delete notes at any time. Select the note to be deleted by clicking on it with the mouse. Then click the Delete button.

Using Predefined Markers

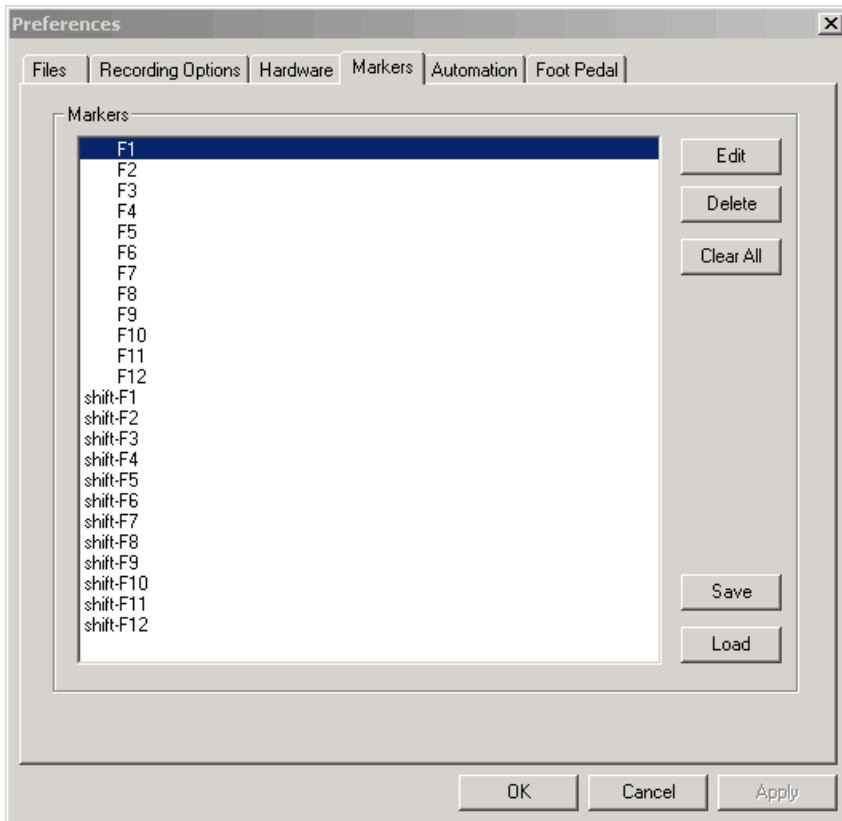
There are 24 predefined Markers that can be used to enter text values into notes. Markers can be specified in three places:

- Transcriber Live Program Preferences
- Docket Template files
- Individual recording files using Edit Markers in the Marker popup window

The Marker is added to the file by pressing one of the 24 function keys (F1 through F12 and Shift-F1 through Shift-F12). This can be while the recording is being made and during playback.

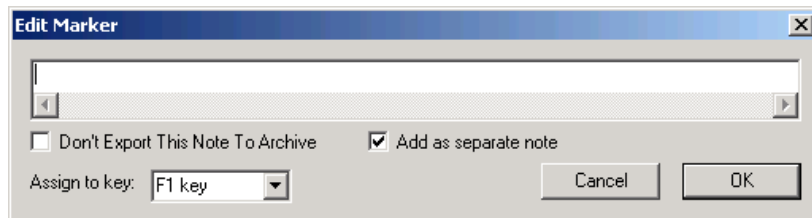
Predefined Markers in Preferences

The program can be set up to have a set of default Markers for all new files. These Marker definitions are stored in the Preference file and are copied into each new file when it is created. To edit the Marker information in the Preferences, select Edit/Preferences from the pulldown menu. Then select the Marker tab. This will display the list of existing markers:



Editing Markers

To add or edit new text for a Marker, select it in the list and click the Edit button. This will bring up the Edit Marker Dialog:



The text of the Marker is entered in the text field. The check boxes affect the behavior of the note when entered.

The check box “Don’t Export This Note To Archive” will set the note checkbox value of the same name when the Marker is entered. This is convenient for entering routine notes into a recording that should not appear in the archived copies of the file.

The “Add as separate note” check box changes how the note text is added. When this box is checked (the default value) the action of a Marker is to first enter any text that may be in the New Note field (equivalent to pressing the Enter key), and then to enter a separate new note containing just the text that is defined for that note. This is useful when you want to have a Marker that is always entered as a separate note.

The alternative behavior is to have this box uncheck. In that case, the Marker behaves more like a text macro speed key. The text value of the Marker is appended to the end of the New Note field and the cursor is left in that location to allow for typing of additional information. In addition, the state of the “Don’t Export” check box will be copied to the current note.

The “Assign to key:” field allows you to specify to which function key to assign the Marker information.

After entering the desired marker data, click OK to store the new values in the program preference file.

Save and Load Marker Data

The Save button will save the Marker data from this dialog in a new text file. The default directory is the SoniClear program directory. The Load button will restore data values

previously save. The Save and Load feature is separate from the automatic save that occurs to retain the information in the program preference file.

Editing Markers in Recording Files

When a new file is created, the predefined Markers stored in the Preferences will be copied into the new file. These values can be edited and saved in that file. To do that, create a new file or open an existing file. Then click the Markers button in the main window and click the Edit Markers button in the Marker popup window. This will display the Edit Current Markers dialog, which works in the same way as the dialog for entering predefined markers in the Preferences (see above).

Editing Markers in Docket Templates

Every Docket Template includes a set of predefined Markers that are copied into a recording file along with the docket information. To edit this Marker information, select the Edit Markers button in the Edit Docket Template dialog. This will display the Markers dialog, which allows editing the Marker information just like the Markers in the Preferences and the Markers in the recording file.

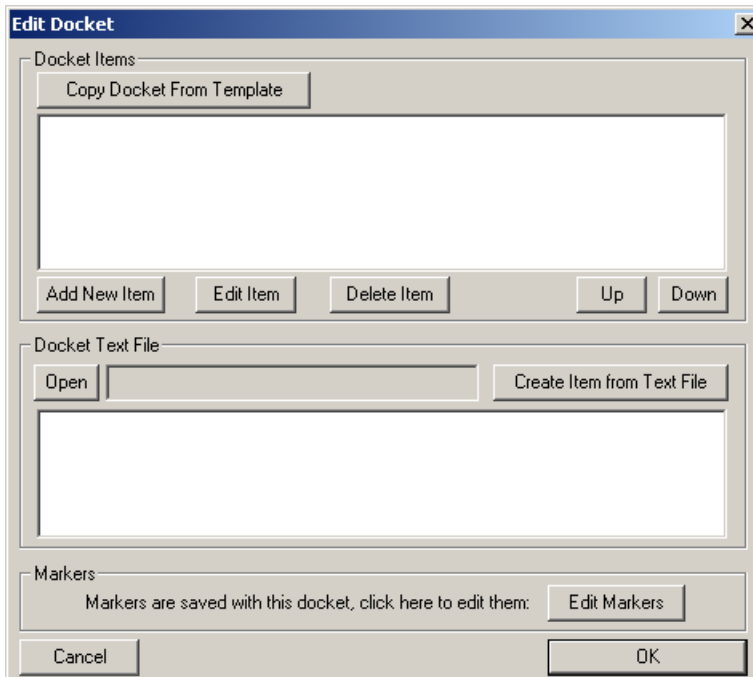
Recording Sessions with a Docket

Transcriber Live has a number of features specifically to make it easy and productive to record court sessions that have a scheduled docket. The docket features in Transcriber Live can also be used to enter deposition information in advance, such as exhibits. Features include:

- Prepare court docket in advance to simplify entry of notes.
- Import docket items from text files.
- Create Docket Templates for standardized sessions.
- Take notes during sessions from docket items or predefined notes with a single keypress.
- Edit notes during recording or playback
- Export notes to text files for import into word processing documents and web pages.

Entering a Court Docket

After creating the file, click the Docket button to display the Docket popup window. Then click the Edit Docket button. This will display the Edit Docket dialog for adding and editing docket items:



Add Docket Items

There are three ways to add new docket items:

- Copy Docket From Template button to copy an entire docket
- Add New Item button for adding individual items
- Create Item From Text File button to copy items from a text file

Copy Docket From Template Button

Complete dockets that have been saved into a Transcriber Live Docket Template can be copied into this file by clicking the Copy Docket From Template button. This will also copy the Marker data from the stored docket template.

Add New Item Button

You can add new docket items to the list using the Add New Item button. Type the text of the item using the popup dialog. You can also use the Windows clipboard to paste text from other sources, such as a Word document.

Create Item From Text File Button

For more complex dockets, it is useful to import the docket items using an existing word processing file. This is accomplished by opening a text file with the docket items. Then select an item in the list and click the Create Item from Text File button to add it to the Transcriber Live list of docket items.

When selecting a docket item, you can select more than one line. Use the standard Windows control to do that, hold down the shift key and click to select a range of lines. The first line becomes the docket item title and all additional lines are copied into the detail field of the docket item. See the section below: “Importing a Docket from Microsoft Word”,

Edit Docket Items

To edit the title or detail information of a docket item, select the item in the Docket Items list and click Use the Edit Item. The Delete Item button will remove an item from the list. The order of items can be changed by clicking the Up and Down buttons, which will move the selected item higher or lower in the list.

Where Docket Items Are Stored

When entering docket items while a recording file is open, the information is automatically associated with the recording. Once the docket items have been entered,

click OK and the items will appear in the Docket section of the main Transcriber Live window.

The docket items are saved to disk in a file with the same name as the current recording file, with the extension of BKM. Note: If you are copying recording files to other computers, you must also copy the BKM file that matches the audio file.

When creating docket items in a Docket Template, the information is stored in a separate .AGD file, which can then be copied at a later time into a recording file.

Docket Templates

You may want to enter docket items in advance of the recording session. This is most easily accomplished by creating a Docket Template and then copying the docket into a new recording just before the session begins.

To do this, use the Create Docket Template option from the Docket pulldown menu item. The process for entering the docket items is the same as for entering items into a recording (as described above).

Importing a Docket from Microsoft Word

To import a docket from an existing Word document into a Transcriber Live docket template, follow these steps:

1. Open the existing Word document.
2. Save the file as a text file by selecting File/SaveAs from the pulldown menu and specifying the file type option of “Text Only” or “Plain Text”. Note: the exact terminology and dialog sequence for saving the file in text format will vary depending on which version of Word is being used.
3. Close the file in Word (this is important, otherwise SoniClear will not be able to open this file).
4. Start SoniClear and select “Create New Template” from the Docket pulldown menu. This will display the Edit Docket Template dialog.
5. Click the Open button and select the text file that you saved in Step 2.
6. Click on the first docket item to add, shown in the Docket Text File list.
7. Click the Create Item from Text File button. This will move the text file item from the text file list to the Docket Items list. If you select multiple lines, all will be added, with the first line being the title and subsequent lines being detail information.
8. The list box selection will automatically move to the next item on the list in the text file. You can continue to add docket items by clicking the Create Item from Text File button until you have added all of the docket items.
9. Optionally you can click the Edit Markers button to create a set of markers specifically for this recording.
10. Click the OK button to save the docket template in a new file. Enter a file name and verify the folder for storing the file. The default file location is the same as the folder that is used for saving SoniClear recordings.
11. Click Save. This will save the docket information in a file of the “.AGD”.

You can import this Docket Template information into a new recording by selecting “Copy Docket From Template” from the Docket pulldown menu and then selecting this docket file from the file selection dialog.

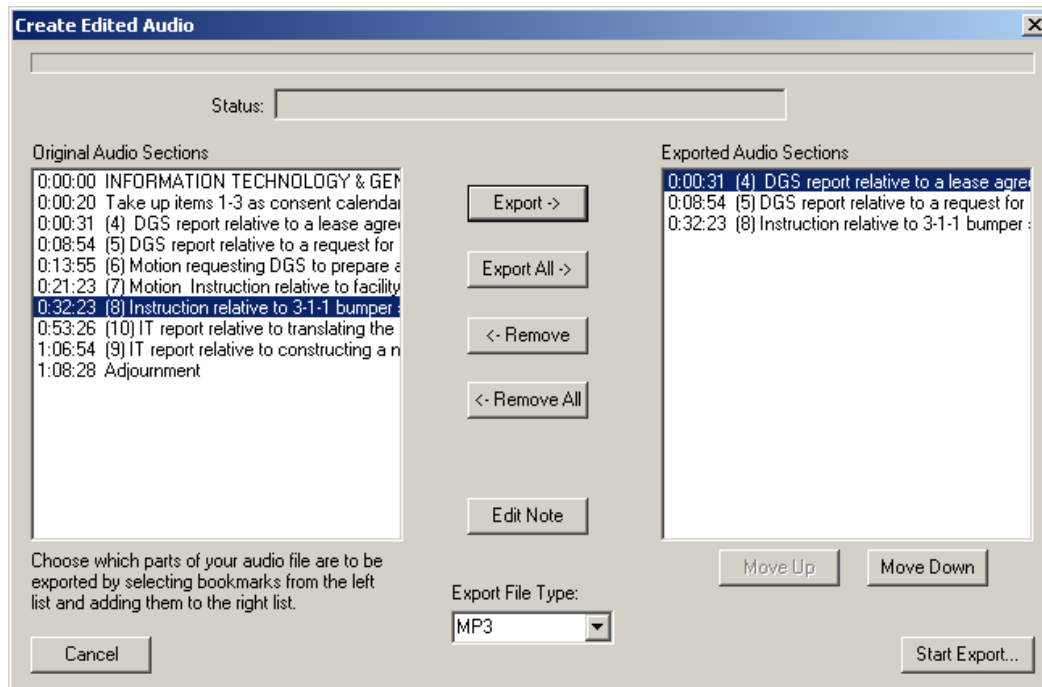
File Editing

Transcriber Live includes the ability to easily edit audio files. This feature is available only for computers that have a Court Recorder USB Key inserted, or a Court Recorder license installed (using the Floating License feature).

Notes entered into the file designate the sections to be extracted. The user can simply specify which sections should be included in a new, edited version of the file (the “Edited Copy” of the file that is generated). The edited file can be exported into MP3, or WAV format.

Transcriber Live file editing makes it easy to copy selected sections of a recording to a new file. The edited file can then be sent by email, copied to disk or posted to a web server for people who need the information for review. The location to edit is entered into the file using Transcriber Live, while the actual export process is performed by Court Recorder.

To edit a file, start Transcriber Live and open an existing file (or record a new file). Then select File/Create Edited Copy. Following is a screen shot of a recording showing the Create Edited Audio dialog:



Selecting Edits

The left selection list, Original Audio Sections, shows all of the notes entered for the recording. The right selection list, Exported Audio Sections, shows the sections of the file to be written to the edited audio file.

The user can pick sections to export by highlighting one or more items in the Original Audio Sections list and clicking the Export button. The user can also copy all of the items to export them by clicking the Export All button.

Items that have already been moved to the Export Audio Sections list can also be selectively removed. Click the item to remove and click the Remove button. The export items list can be cleared by clicking the Remove All button.

When a note has the Cut Audio check box selected, the text of the note will be displayed in brackets (“[]”). These items cannot be copied to the export sections list. This makes it easy to copy all of the items to the export list without sections that are marked for removal (such as off-the-record discussions) from being accidentally put in the output list. A note can be edited by selecting it in the Original Audio Sections list and clicking the Edit Note button.

Selecting Export Type

The Export File Type selection box allows the user to pick the type of file being created with the edited sections. The default type is MP3, which uses the 48kbps mono or 64kbps stereo encoding rate, depending on whether it is a mono or stereo original file.

The WAV option creates a Court Recorder standard audio file that consists of a 22kbps/16bit WAV file (in mono or stereo, depending on the original file format). The notes in the Exported Audio Sections list are exported into a matching BKM file. Like exporting CF3 files, the WAV and BKM file pair can then be opened and used for playback and processing like an originally recorded Court Recorder file.

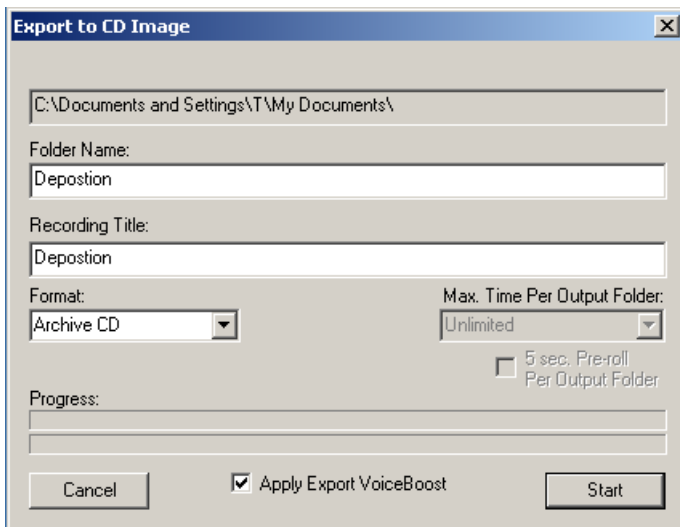
Start Export

Clicking the Start Export button will initiate the export process. Depending on the size of the original recording, this process may awhile to complete. The progress of the exporting is shown in a progress bar at the top of the screen, along with a status message showing the current export step. Exporting can be cancelled at any time while editing the lists, or during processing, by clicking the Cancel button.

Export to CD Image

Transcriber Live has the ability to export files for burning to a CD. The purpose of Export to CD Image is to make it easy to create an archive copy of the recording on CDROM that is compatible with computers, CD players and cassette tape. Three different formats are supported for exporting: Archive Format (using MP3 audio files), and Audio CD format (sometimes called "music" format or "Red Book" format), and Native format (the audio format used to make the recording).

Selecting Export to CD Image will display the export dialog:



When exporting to Audio CD or Tape formats, you can select the maximum length of the recording on each disk image. When exporting to Audio CD, Data CD, or Tape formats, the option to "Pre-roll" the beginning of the next segment is enabled. The Pre-roll feature creates a 5 second overlap between disks (or tapes) so that words will not be lost when they cross a media boundary.

Export in Archive Format

The Export to CD Image feature generates a set of files that can be burned to a CDROM using the software included with the CD-RW drive on your computer. The default action is to export in "Archive (MP3)" format. The resulting disk can be played in any Windows computer. Archive format uses 48Kbps Mono MP3 format for very high quality audio in relatively small files. Because an MP3 format CD can hold up to 30 hours of audio on a single disk, exporting to Archive format will produce a single disk image, regardless of the length of the original recording (which will be 24 hours or less). Archive format recordings will never be split across multiple disks.

Note that when the file being exported only the left channel will be exported to the archive file. Audio from the right channel (used primarily for a stenomask channel for court reporting) is not exported in the resulting MP3 file.

When the disk produced by this process is inserted into a Windows computer, it will automatically play the recording in a standalone SoniClear Player program. The recording notes are included in the user display, allowing for direct access to different sections of the recording. This capability has several advantages over just writing the original WAV and BKM files to CDROM (or converting to MP3 format):

1. Recordings up to the full 6 hour Court Recorder file time recording limit can be written to a CDROM as a single recording. In fact, up to 30 hours of audio can be stored on a CDROM using this feature, stored as separate directories on the disk.
2. By providing a user interface for playing back the file (with the SoniClear Player), the user does not need a separately installed Internet media player (such as Windows Media or Real Networks RealPlayer). When playing back the CDROM on a Windows computer, it automatically launches the Windows program (SoniClearPlayer.exe) to play back the file.
3. The SoniClear Player interface also shows the notes that are entered into Court Recorder. This allows the user to navigate to specific locations in the recording, skipping material that is not of interest. This allows for efficient review of the information contained in the recording.

Producing an Archive Format CD

Once the session has been recorded and you have edited the notes to your satisfaction, you are ready to export the recording into a separate directory that will contain all of the files needed for burning onto the archive format CDROM.

Start the export process by opening the file to be exported. Then select option "File/Export to CD Image" from the pulldown menu. The files will be written into a folder using the name of the file as the folder name, or any other folder name you enter in the export dialog. In this dialog you can also specify the Recording Title, although this does not appear in the exported files.

Be sure the Format option is set to the default setting, "Archive CD". Then click the Start button.

After exporting has completed, you will have a directory with all of the files needed to create the CDROM disk. The exported files are stored in a single folder (directory) of the same name as the original recording file. The location of that folder is specified in the Files tab of the Edit Preferences dialog (Edit/Preferences from the pulldown menu). The default location is in MyDocuments.

Use the CD writing software included with your computer to burn the disk, selecting the Data option in the CD writing software (not music format). When the Data CD is written correctly, all of the files in the export subdirectory will be written to the "root" directory of the CD and you will be able to see these files by viewing the CD in the Windows file explorer.

Export to Audio CD Format

Another format option is to export in "Audio CD" format. This exports files that can be written using the "music" format option of the CD burning software. The resulting disks are compatible with conventional audio CD players of the type usually found in cars and home stereo equipment.

The export process generates a set of file folders, named "Disk1", "Disk2", "Disk3", etc. Each folder will contain one or more WAV files, "Track001.wav", "Track002.wav", "Track003.wav", etc. The length of each track is controlled by the location of notes in the recording and the maximum amount of time allowed for each disk. The software automatically determines where to split the recording to ensure that each section of a recording has it's own track, and that disks do not exceed the maximum length. When the software identifies a section that can not be recorded on a disk without going over the maximum length, the section is arbitrarily split at the point that will store the maximum time on the disk.

The Audio CD option allows you to select the length of the recording on CD. This allows you to customize the length for different types of recording media. Standard audio compact disks have a maximum play time of 70 minutes, however, special disks can be purchased for up to 80 minutes. This option can also be used to export audio files of the proper length for unattended copying to audio cassette tape. The default maximum time per disk is 60 minutes, to allow production of CDs that can easily be copied to cassette tape. When creating audio cassettes, the audio can be played from a CD, or played from the disk image stored on the computer drive. However, if you are not burning audio compact disks, you should use the Native format option for creating files for writing to tape, since that uses less disk space (see Export to Data CD Format).

In addition to maximum time to store on each disk, you can control the split point for each disk by adding a note at the location you want to split disks and checking the "Start new CD-Image Folder Here" option in the note Export option section. This allows you to start a CD at any arbitrary location, regardless of space used on the disk.

When a note to start a new disk is not found before the maximum disk time specified, the system will automatically split the recording to a new disk. You have the option of this split occurring with or without "Pre-roll". When Pre-roll is selected in the Export dialog screen, five seconds of the previous disk is included in the next disk. This allows for words that may be chopped off in the middle to be repeated in whole on the next disk. If this option is not selected, there will be no overlap between the audio on the disks.

Because of the complexity of converting audio files from the original recorded format (22K, mono) to the larger size (44K, stereo), exporting to Audio CD format is slow. The export time is shown when you start the process. You can cancel exporting at any time by clicking the Cancel button.

The files created by Audio CD export are extremely large. For example, a 2-channel recording of a four hour session will take approximately 1.2 Gigabytes for the original recording WAV file (158 Megabytes per hour of recording time * 2 channels). This will be exported into a set of files for burning onto four CDs, and will take approximately 2.5 Gigabytes of disk space (620 megabytes per 60 minutes of recording time). Be sure to have adequate disk space before starting the export process. If the program runs out of disk space before completing, the export process will have to be repeated, starting from the beginning.

When burning the exported files to the CD, the CD writing software must have the "Music CD" option selected, not Data. Otherwise the generated disk will not play in a normal audio CD player. When selecting the tracks to burn on the disk, it is **extremely important** that you sort the order of the track files into alphabetical order. Otherwise the recording will have the tracks written in a jumbled order. For some reason, most CD burning software will place the first selected track at the end of the list by default. Clicking on the file Name column header will cause the list to be properly sorted. Once the disk has been burned, there is no way to tell if the files were written in the correct order, so you must always check this detail before burning the disk.

The CDs that you put into a computer can have a paper label applied to the surface. However, on Audio CDs, a label can cause the disk to become jammed when playing on a conventional audio CD player, especially those that load through a slot. Do not use a paper label unless you know that the disk will be used on a machine that will not jam. You can write onto the disk directly using a permanent marker. However, this method of marking should not be used for archive copies, as it is likely that the chemicals in such a marker will reduce the storage life of the disk (the chemicals in a permanent marker will eventually seep into the disk, damaging the information stored on the metal surface inside the disk). For best appearance and storage life, use special printer designed for printing directly onto the disk.

Export to Data CD Format

Another format option is to export a Data CD image. This exports files in "native" format (the format of the recording) for writing to disk using the "data" format option of the CD burning software. The resulting disks can be played on any computer, but are not compatible with audio CD players.

The options and directions are similar to exporting in Audio CD format. The maximum time written to disk option is disabled. The image files add up to 700 Megabytes per disk. When recordings exceed that they are automatically split. You must burn the files using DATA format (not "music" or Red Book). Just like Audio CD format, you can control the split point using the Export option in a recording note. In addition, the Pre-roll option will overlap 5 seconds from the preceding disk, when enabled.

Export Tape Image Files

Using Tape format option in Export to CD Image, it is easy to use digital Court Recorder recordings for duplication to audio cassette tapes. Specify the "Maximum Time Per Output Folder" to the length of cassette tape that you will be using (30, 45, 60, 90, or 120, default is 45).

Once the files have been generated, you can play these files while running a cassette tape recorder connected to the computer sound card output. Consult with your audio or computer technical specialist to set up this recording connection. The significant advantage of this approach over any other alternative is that you do not need to monitor when each tape has filled up. Once the cassette side has been recorded, flip or insert the next tape and record while playing the next tape image file on the computer.

IMPORTANT NOTE: in the current release of Court Recorder, the Tape option for exporting files does not recognize the Cut Audio notes entered in the file. As a result,

sections that will be removed by other archive and export options will not be removed using the Tape export option. If the Cut Audio feature of Court Recorder is being used to remove audio that is not on the record, the Tape export option should not be used.

Export to MP3 CD Format

Another format option is to export an MP3 CD image. This exports files in standard MP3 format for writing to disk using the "data" format option of the CD burning software. The resulting disks can be played on any computer or MP3 file compatible CD player. This type of disk is not compatible with conventional audio CD players, such as those found in most cars and home audio systems. Up to 30 hours of audio data can be stored on a CD using this MP3 format.

The options and directions are similar to exporting in Audio CD format. The maximum time written to disk option is disabled. Just like Audio CD format, the recording is divided into MP3 "tracks", separate MP3 files for each section of the recording.

Archive and Export Options

In the Edit Note dialog, two check boxes are available to control how the audio recording and notes are handled in the Export to CD Image feature. These allow you to control which notes are displayed, and to remove any section of the recording that should remain off the record (audio that was recorded in error, such as before the beginning of a session, at breaks, or after the end of the session).

The original recording and notes are not affected in any way by the settings of these options. Only the files generated by Export to CD Image are altered.

Don't Export This Note

By checking this option, the text entered in this note will not appear in the exported files. This allows you to enter notes for internal use (such as places that require detailed transcription), without those notes appearing in the version of the file shared with others on CDROM or in the recording archive.

Cut Audio, Insert "Recording Paused"

By checking this option, the user can cause the audio that occurs at this time to be suppressed from the exported file.

How this is treated at export depends on the location of the note in the file. If the note is the very first note, or the very last note, the audio is simply removed. If the Don't Export This Note is also checked, there will be no indication of audio having been removed. If the note is at any other location in the file, there will be a visual and audio indication of the recording having been altered. The message "Recording Paused" is inserted into the notes at that time location. In place of the audio of that section, a prerecorded message is inserted that says "Recording Paused".

The audio output will be resumed at the time of the next note that does not have the "Cut Audio" option checked.

The prerecorded audio that announces the recording has been paused is contained in the RecordingPaused.mp3 and RecordingPaused.wav files, in the ArchiveAudio source directories (under the program directory). You can use Court Recorder to record a new version of this announcement. Create a new file named RecordingPaused, selecting "CD" as the format. Record a short message to be played when the Recording Paused option is checked. Export the recording to an MP3 file named RecordingPaused.mp3. Copy the

RecordingPaused.wav and RecordingPaused.mp3 files to the ArchiveAudio directories (under the program directory).

IMPORTANT NOTE: in the current release of Transcriber Live, the Tape option for exporting files does not recognize the Cut Audio notes entered in the file. As a result, sections that will be removed by other archive and export options will not be removed using the Tape export option. If the Cut Audio feature of Court Recorder is being used to remove audio that is not on the record, the Tape export option should not be used.

Start New CD-Image Folder Here

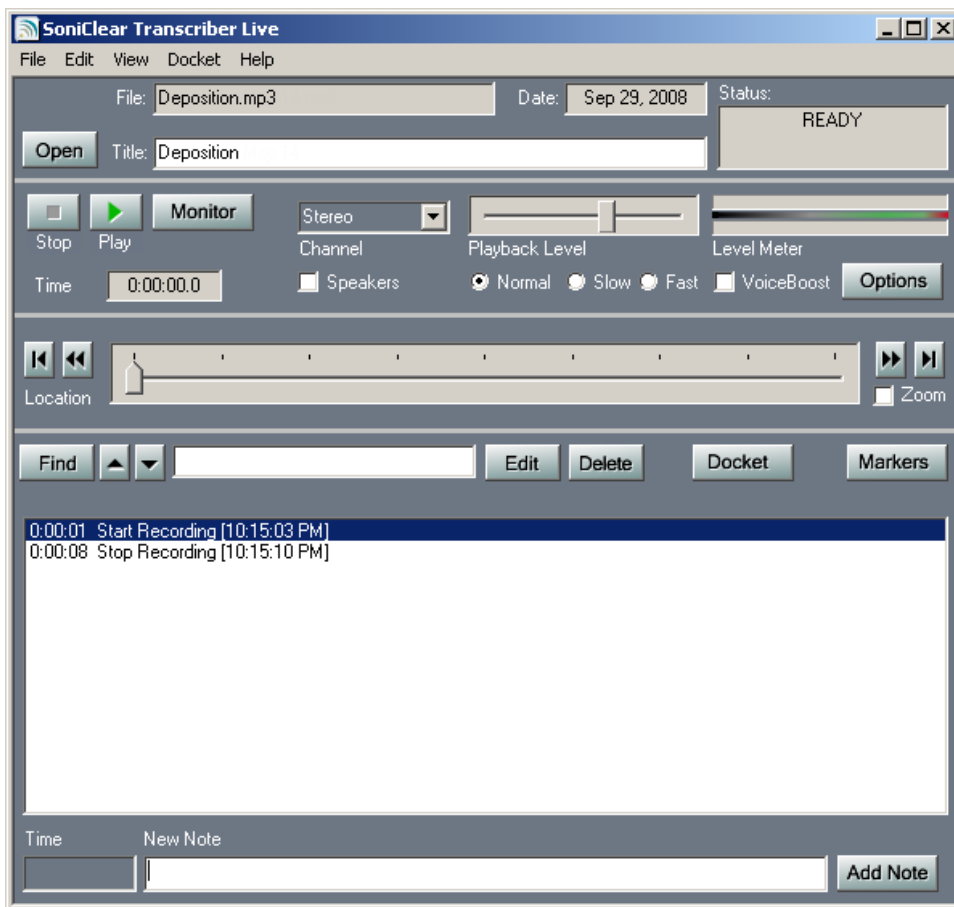
This option applies to Export to CD Image when using Audio CD format or Native format. By checking this option, the user can cause the audio that occurs at this time to be moved to the start of a new disk when doing Export to CD Image (for Audio CD and Native file formats). This allows the location for splitting files between disks to be controlled exactly. This option also applies to Tape format exports.

Using Transcriber Live for Transcribing

Transcriber Live provides advanced playback transcription features, including:

- Stereo mix or individual channel playback selection
- Timescale playback for slower or faster playing without pitch shift
- VoiceBoost audio enhancement
- Foot Pedal Support

Starting Transcriber Live displays the main playback window with the last recorded file open:



Opening Files

Transcriber Live is designed to open files created in Court Recorder. It will not open files from any other recording system directly. If you need to use Transcriber Live to open an MP3 recording from another source, such as a backup recording, it must be “imported” using Court Recorder. For example, use File/Import from MP3 function to import a file for use with Transcriber Live. This creates a BKM for storing note information.

Channel Selection

The Channel Selection combo box in the playback section of the main window allows for selection of the audio to be played. For 2-Channel recordings, the selection is either Stereo, Left, or Right channels. For Multi-Channel recordings (4 - 14 channels) the combo box offers the choice of Stereo, Left, or Right channels (for playing the stereo mix of all of the channels), or the individual tracks that are in the recording (depending on how many tracks were recorded). If one of the track files is missing on the playback computer, an error message will be displayed.

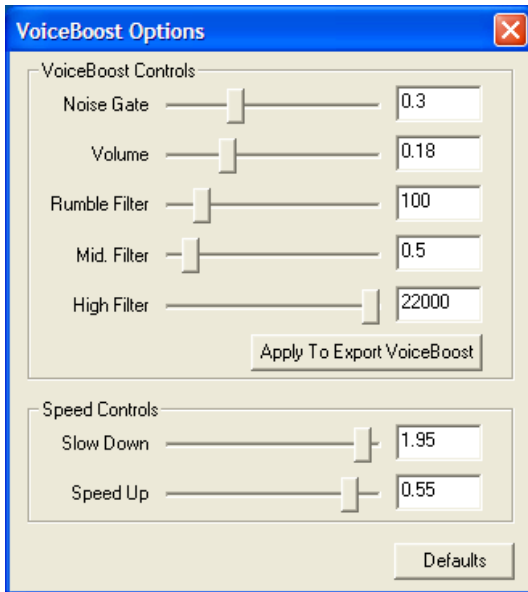
Timescale Playback

Transcriber Live includes a feature to change the speed of playback to facilitate transcription. When the file is open, select the Normal, Slow, or Fast radio button settings to control speed of playback. The Options button allows the user to select the amount of speed shift desired. Note that the Speed Up feature requires a computer with at least a 1.5Ghz processor. Otherwise, the computer cannot perform the timescale processing fast enough for smooth playback.

VoiceBoost

The VoiceBoost feature increases the sound quality of the recording. The VoiceBoost is enabled during monitoring and playback in Transcriber Live. VoiceBoost is applied during playback by clicking the VoiceBoost check box just below the Level Meter.

The default values for VoiceBoost are designed to improve the clarity of speaking voices. You will need to experiment with how the VoiceBoost processing works with your recordings. You can change these default settings by clicking the Options button. This brings up a dialog that allows you to adjust a number of parameters:



Noise Gate

The Noise Gate allows you to reduce the volume of background noise. By positioning the Noise Gate level above the noise volume and below the volume of people speaking, VoiceBoost will increase the volume of speaking and not the noise.

Volume

You can increase or decrease the overall volume of the recording with the Volume slider. This volume control allows you to boost up dramatically people speaking softly in the recording so that they can be heard distinctly. This is different than the volume for the playback device in the main window, which must be set high enough to hear the sound from the speaker or headphones.

Rumble Filter

Low frequency noise can interfere with the ability to hear people speaking. When there is loud air conditioning noise or street traffic, this will often include a large low frequency component. By moving the Rumble Filter setting further to the right, it will cut out more of the low frequencies.

Mid Filter

The Mid Filter slider is designed to boost the loudness of middle frequencies, the frequency range that contains most of the detail of spoken language. By moving the Mid Filter slider further to the right, it will boost these frequencies to make the speaking louder. Moving the slider further to the right will make the sound quality more natural sounding.

High Filter

The High Filter slider allows you to reduce high frequencies. Background noise in the high frequency range can sometimes interfere with intelligibility of speaking the the mid range frequencies. Moving the slider further to the left will reduce the high frequenciesw.

Speed Controls

The VoiceBoost Options dialog also includes controls for setting the rate of slow down or speed up when selecting that option in the main window.

Foot Pedal Support

Transcriber Live provides the same hands-free functionality of a transcription machine, allowing the user to start and stop playback without having to take hands off the keyboard. This feature can be controlled through a keyboard shortcut, or using an optional hardware foot pedal.

Virtual Foot Pedal

Transcriber Live provides a simulation of the USB foot pedal using special key combinations. This eliminates the need for the optional hardware USB foot pedal in many situations. The special Virtual Foot Pedal keys will allow the user to perform the same type of action as a USB foot pedal, regardless of what program is running in the foreground. For example, Transcriber Live can be running in the background, while typing a transcript in the foreground on a word processor. Default key values are Control-8 for left foot pedal, Control-; (semicolon) for center pedal, and Control-9 for left foot pedal. These can be changed in the Preferences dialog. In addition to operating during playback, the Virtual Foot Pedal keys will work while recording, just like the USB foot pedal.

USB Foot Pedal

No additional software is needed to use the USB Foot Pedal. To enable the Foot Pedal feature, perform the following steps:

1. Install a SoniClear USB Foot Pedal (purchased separately from SoniClear). When first plugged in, Windows will display messages indicating that the Foot Pedal is being installed (referred to as a USB HID device).

2. Start Transcriber Live.
3. Select Edit/Preferences from the pulldown menu, and click on the Foot Pedal tab.
4. Click the "Test X-Keys Foot Pedal" button to verify operation of the device. The popup message "X-keys foot pedal is operating correctly." should be displayed. If not, recheck proper installation of the USB pedal.
5. Options are available for how the foot pedal works during playback, simulating a transcription machine.
6. Additional options provide for using the foot pedal during recording to insert notes while recording. There are three choices for recording actions. "Do Nothing" disables any action by that pedal during recording. "Add Note" automatically adds a blank note when the foot pedal is pressed. This is the same action as pressing the Spacebar key on the keyboard. "Edit Note" adds a note and pops up the Edit Note dialog box to allow for editing.
7. Default settings are provided for the operation of the Foot Pedal. You can change these settings at any time and they will be saved in the Preference file.

Foot Pedal Operation

Operation While Playing

With Transcriber Live running, start, stop, wind, and rewind playback of any file that is currently open will be controlled by the Foot Pedal, as well as the regular program controls. The pedal will continue to control Transcriber Live operation, even when you are using another program, such as a word processor, for transcribing dialog.

Default action of the foot pedal:

- Left Foot Pedal rewinds audio 10 seconds when pressed.
- Center Foot Pedal plays audio when pressed, then rewinds 5 seconds when lifted.
- Right Foot Pedal fast forwards audio 10 seconds when pressed.

These default values can be modified by editing the Program Preferences (Edit/Preferences, Foot Pedal tab).

IMPORTANT: you must plug in the USB Foot Pedal before starting Transcriber Live. It may take a few seconds for the USB device to register with the operating system. If for some reason the USB Foot Pedal does not appear to be working after it has been plugged in, go to the Edit/Preferences dialog. In the Foot Pedal tab, click the Test X-keys Foot Pedal button to make sure it is working correctly.

Operation While Recording

The default options allow for the center pedal to perform the Add Docket Item action when pressed during recording. This is useful for situations where the recording needs to be annotated with a minimum of user involvement with the computer, such as during a lecture or presentation. The default option for the left pedal is to perform Edit Note. This adds a note and pops up the edit dialog. These defaults can be modified in the Program Preferences dialog.

Toggle 2-Channel Playback

The left and right foot pedal switch can be used to control the toggling of playback between left and right channels using the USB or Virtual Foot Pedal. This action is specified in the Edit/Preferences/Foot Pedal dialog tab. Check the Enable box and select the Left/Right Toggle option, instead of Rewind Audio option.

Editing Program Preferences

Various actions of Court Recorder and Transcriber Live can be customized through the settings in the program Preferences. Select Edit/Preferences from the pulldown menu to display the Preferences dialog. Preferences are divided into tabbed groups: "Files", "Recording Options", "Hardware", "Markers", "Automation" and "Foot Pedal". Court Recorder also includes a "License" tab for management of the program Floating License.

Files Preference Tab

The Files tab provides for control over the management of sound files while creating, opening, and recording.

Files - Default Directory

When creating new files, or opening existing files, the default directory is specified by this option. The current default directory is shown here. Clicking the Browse... button will allow you to select a directory from a dialog box display of the directories on disk. Checking the "Always use last directory" option will cause the program to remember the last directory used in the Open or New file dialogs, and this information is saved between sessions.

Files - File Suffix

A file name dialog is shown when clicking the New button (or selecting the File/New menu item). The File Suffix specified in the Preferences will be appended to the new file name entered there by the user. Entry of a file name is optional. If the file name is left blank, the File Suffix will be used by itself. If both the file name and the File Suffix are blank, the program will substitute a default name for the recording ("2-Channel", "4-Channel", "6-Channel", etc.).

The File Suffix feature can be used to set a different default file name. Commonly, it will be used to specify the name of the user (or initials) for recordings that are stored in a shared directory.

NOTE: In addition to the File Suffix, the program will append a numeric value, such as "(2)", when the file name specified by the user is not unique. This makes it easy to quickly create a new file without having to be concerned with making the file name

unique. When selecting the Custom file type from the new file dialog, the name specified is used without the addition of a file suffix or numeric value.

Default Export Image Folder Directories

The CD Image Export directory is the location of the directory for exporting a folder containing the recording files, when using the Export to CD Image feature. If the check box "Store CD Image Export Folders in Original File's Location" is checked, the directory location is forced to be the directory containing the file being exported, rather than a single, fixed directory.

Recording Options Preference Tab

The Recording Options tab controls which type of recording will be displayed as the default value when creating a new file. The options are 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, or 14 channels.

When specifying 2 channel recording, the program records a "stereo mix" from the audio source. The Transcriber Live channel selector will show "Stereo", "Left", "Right".

When specifying more than 2 channels, the first two channels will be labeled as "Stereo Mix" and the additional channels will be labeled as 1, 2, 3, etc. For example, a 4 channel recording will be displayed in the Transcriber Live channel selector as "Stereo", "Left", "Right", "1", "2".

For sound cards that have only two channels, those channels will be recorded without any mixing. For sound cards or external audio interface equipment that incorporate a built-in mixer, this stereo mix may consist of a mix of one or more of the input channels. Refer to the hardware documentation for instructions on setting the mixer options.

Recordings can be made in WAV or MP3 format. Set the radio button to the desired format.

The Custom section of the screen is only for reference purposes, showing the recording options used in Court Recorder.

Hardware Preference Tab

See the Court Recorder Installation Guide for details about how to configure the Hardware Preference Tab.

Markers Preference Tab

The Markers tab in the Preferences dialog allows you to enter a set of 24 predefined Marker notes as default text values. Each time a new file is created, the Marker note text entered in the Preferences screen will be copied into the new file.

Automation Preference Tab

The Automatic Notation tab in the Preferences dialog allows you to tailor the action of the automatic bookmarking feature to suit personal preferences.

Automatic Level Detection

Automatic Level Detection is used to assist in locating portions of the audio where there is no speaking (or other forms of silence). This is used normally to indicate silence (such as a point when people stop speaking at a deposition), but can also be used to determine when an audio recording source has failed (no audio being delivered to the computer).

The software continuously measures the amplitude of the audio data being recorded. If the level of the audio remains lower than the specified Low Volume Level threshold for the Low Volume Minimum Time Length specified, a timestamped note will be entered automatically. The time indicated in the note will be the beginning point in time where the low volume was encountered, not at the point where the minimum time has been reached.

Situations where loud noises other than talking are being picked up by the system may cause this automatic notation feature to be unusable, because such loud sounds will always reset the time counter before the Low Volume Minimum Time is reached.

Add Bookmarks When Audio Level is Low

Checking this option will enable the feature to automatically add bookmarks based on detection of low recording volume. Unchecking this option is disable this feature.

Low Volume Level

This is the decibel level that triggers the detection of low audio volume. The number is actually the negative of the value entered. For example, the default value of 60 means -60db below 0db (where 0db is the maximum recording volume). In other words, the larger the numeric value, the softer the level that will trigger the threshold for detecting a low recording level.

If this feature is being used to detect when people have stopped speaking (such as at a deposition or courtroom session), the correct setting for Low Volume Level will depend on the level of background noise. This can be affected by noise sources such as air conditioning noise, street noise or people talking in an audience. In teleconferences the quality of the phone line and the equipment used to attach the computer to the phone system can dramatically affect level of background noise.

To properly detect what the user considers silence, experimentation with recording in the actual recording environment will be required in order for the program to trigger correctly.

Low Volume Min. Time

Low Volume Minimum Time is a value representing the number of seconds that the audio recording level must stay below the Low Volume Level threshold before a note is automatically entered. If audio data is encountered that is higher than the threshold value at any time before this time constant is reached, the time counter will be reset.

The default value is 15 seconds. The most useful value for this time constant will vary widely, depending on the type of speaking that is being recorded. Again, experimentation is the only way to determine the most accurate setting.

Thread Settings

The Thread Settings fields, if visible in this dialog, are for use by qualified Court Recorder technicians only.

Foot Pedal Preference Tab

The Foot Pedal tab in the Preferences dialog allows you to tailor the action of the foot pedal to suit personal preferences. When using Court Recorder with Transcriber Live, the foot pedal features should be disabled in Court Recorder Preferences, with foot pedal actions being handled by Transcriber Live.

Test X-keys Foot Pedal

When installing the software and foot pedal on a new computer, this button allow user to verify the foot pedal is operating correctly.

Left Foot Pedal

Enabled when the Enable check box is selected. Rewinds the audio playback by the number of seconds indicated. Default value is Enabled, with a value of 10 seconds of rewind time when the left pedal is pressed.

Alternatively, the left foot pedal switch (or virtual foot pedal) can be used to toggle between channels of a 2-Channel or Stereo recording. Select Enable and Left/Right Toggle to specify this option.

Center Foot Pedal

Enabled when the Enable check box is selected. Default action is to play audio while the pedal is pressed, with a rewind value of 5 seconds when the pedal is lifted. Alternative action is to play audio only when the center foot pedal is pressed.

Right Foot Pedal

Enabled when the Enable check box is selected. Fast forwards the audio playback by the number of seconds indicated. Default value is Enabled, with a value of 10 seconds of fast forward time when the right pedal is pressed.

Like the left foot pedal, the right foot pedal switch (or virtual foot pedal) can also be used to toggle between channels of a 2-Channel or Stereo recording. Select Enable and Left/Right Toggle to specify this option.

License Tab

This feature applies to Court Recorder. This dialog tab does not appear in the Transcriber Live program because it does not use the Floating License System to start operation. However, when a valid Court Recorder license is detected by Transcriber Live, several file management features are enabled, such as Create Edited Copy.

The Floating License System manages the software licenses that are shipped to the customer on a USB Key device (sometimes referred to as a USB “dongle”). Each USB Key device can store up to 5 separate licenses. From the License tab of the Edit Preferences dialog, a license stored on the USB Key device can be locked to the computer. Once the license is locked on the computer, the USB Key device does not need to be plugged into the computer to run the software.

If the USB Key is plugged into the computer before running Court Recorder, the License Status will be shown (number of licenses on the USB Key and a list of Computer Licenses). If the USB Key was not inserted at the time the Court Recorder program was started, the Check for USB Key button can be clicked after plugging the device into the computer. This will update the License Status information.

The total number of licenses included on the USB Key is shown. If no USB Key is inserted, the number will default to one license, which may not match the number of licenses on the actual device used to lock this license.

In the Computer Licenses section, each computer that has a license locked from the USB Key is shown with the computer name and the lock status. A button next to the current computer will show either Lock or Unlock, depending on the status. If the license needs to be locked to this computer, click the Lock button. Once it has been locked to the computer, the button will show Unlock. Clicking the Unlock button will move the license back to the USB Key, where it can be used on other computers. Unlocking requires having the USB Key used to lock the license. If more than one USB Key is available, using the wrong key will disable the Unlock feature.

Other Program Features

Export Notes to Text File

The File/Export Notes menu selection writes the notes entered for the currently open recording into a new text file. The exported notes can be opened in a word processing program in text format, or inserted into an existing word processing document (for example, in Microsoft Word use the Insert/File option).

Automatic Silence Detection

Court Recorder can be configured by default to automatically detect silence that occurs during a recording. When this happens, a note is entered with a timestamp at the point in time where the silence was detected and where audio resumes. The note also has the Cut Audio export option checked. When using Create Edited Copy, or Export to CD Image, the sections that are marked as silent will be removed from the file or archive being created.

This feature can be turned on or off, as well as setting the threshold and time delay parameters. For details, see the section Editing Program Preferences, Automatic Notation Preference Tab in this manual.

Check for Program Updates

Court Recorder is updated from time to time for the addition of new features and the fixing problems that are discovered in the program after release. You can check for updates to the program by selecting Help/Check For Updates from the pulldown menu. This will launch the default browser displaying the current update information at www.soniclear.com.

Software License Information

The license terms of the Court Recorder and Transcriber Live software are controlled by the “click through” SoniClear license accepted by the user at time of installation. A copy of the license agreement is installed in the software program directory in the file "license.txt". Any other licensing information provided to the customer is for review purposes only. For example, a sample of the SoniClear license agreement appears on the Legal support page at www.soniclear.com. In the event of discrepancies between the license accepted by the user and terms published or otherwise provided to the customer for review, the specific terms specified in license.txt license file shall prevail.

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