

# Vegas User Group – VUGNotes 5

## Using Keyframes

### **1 What are keyframes?**

Keyframes are places in a video event where a change in some property of the event takes place.

All events, without exception, have at least one keyframe – at the beginning of the event. You have to add one or more additional keyframes before anything can happen, because it takes at least two keyframes to specify a difference.

For example, you might pan across a still image by using the Event Pan/Crop tool. You would place one (or more) keyframes in the event and specify where in the image you were looking at those times. By default, the computer then interpolates all frames between the keyframes in a linear fashion – this giving the appearance of movement across the image.

### **2 Uses for keyframes**

Uses for keyframes are limited by your imagination, but here are a few ideas:

- ❖ Panning, zooming and rotating within still images and video events
- ❖ Correcting for brightness, contrast, colour balance etc within an event
- ❖ Starting and stopping special effects within a clip
- ❖ Motion masks and chromakeys
- ❖ Moving sub-titles (Vegas doesn't supply horizontal scrolling)

### **3 Applying keyframing in Vegas 4**

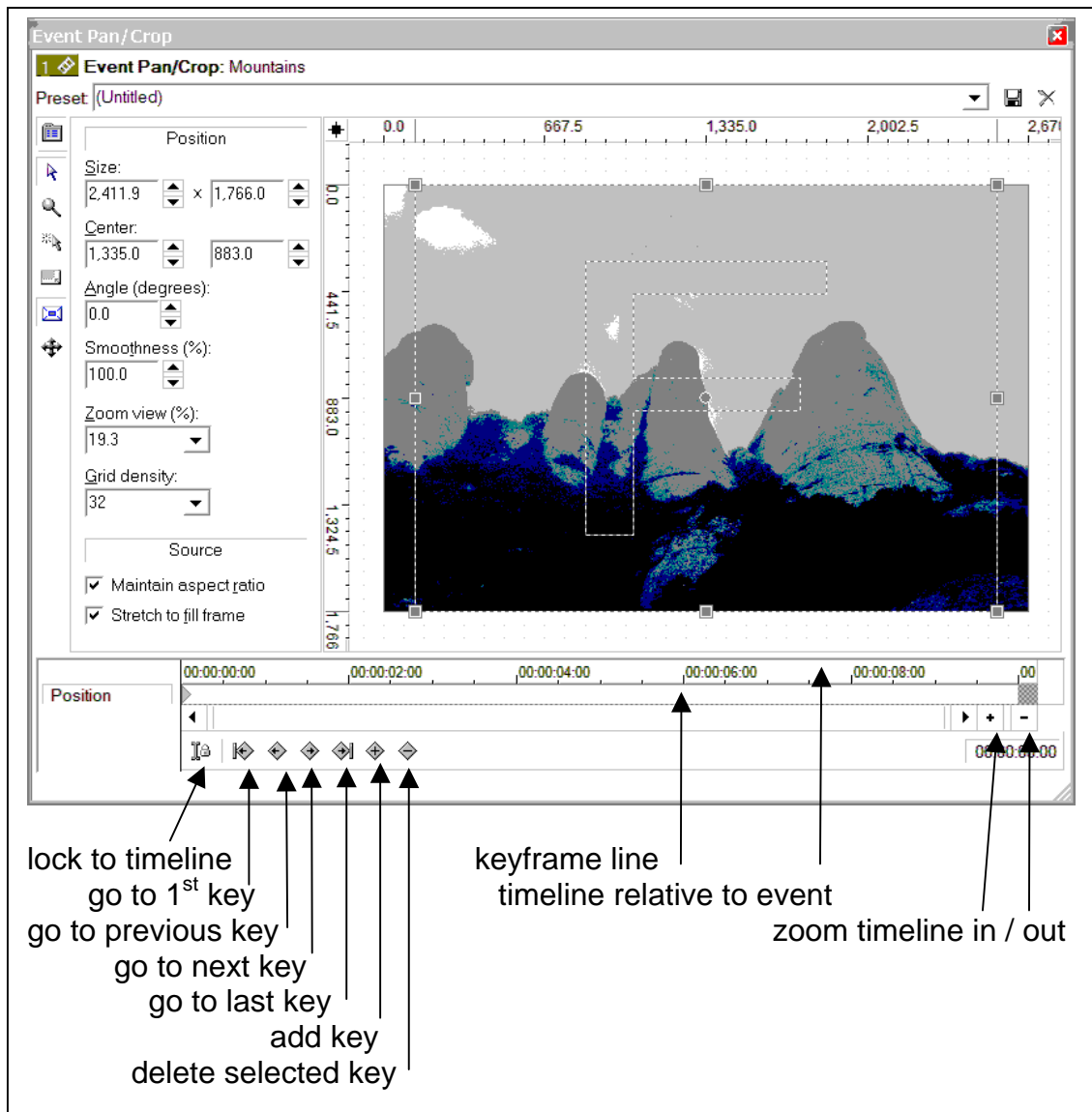
Keyframing in Vegas is all done in the same way – through an event effect dialog box.

For example consider the simple idea of a controlled zoom into a high resolution still image: let's imagine that we want to start with a couple of seconds of the full view of an image and then zoom in to some detail over a four second period, followed by a four second hold on the details.

We do this as follows:

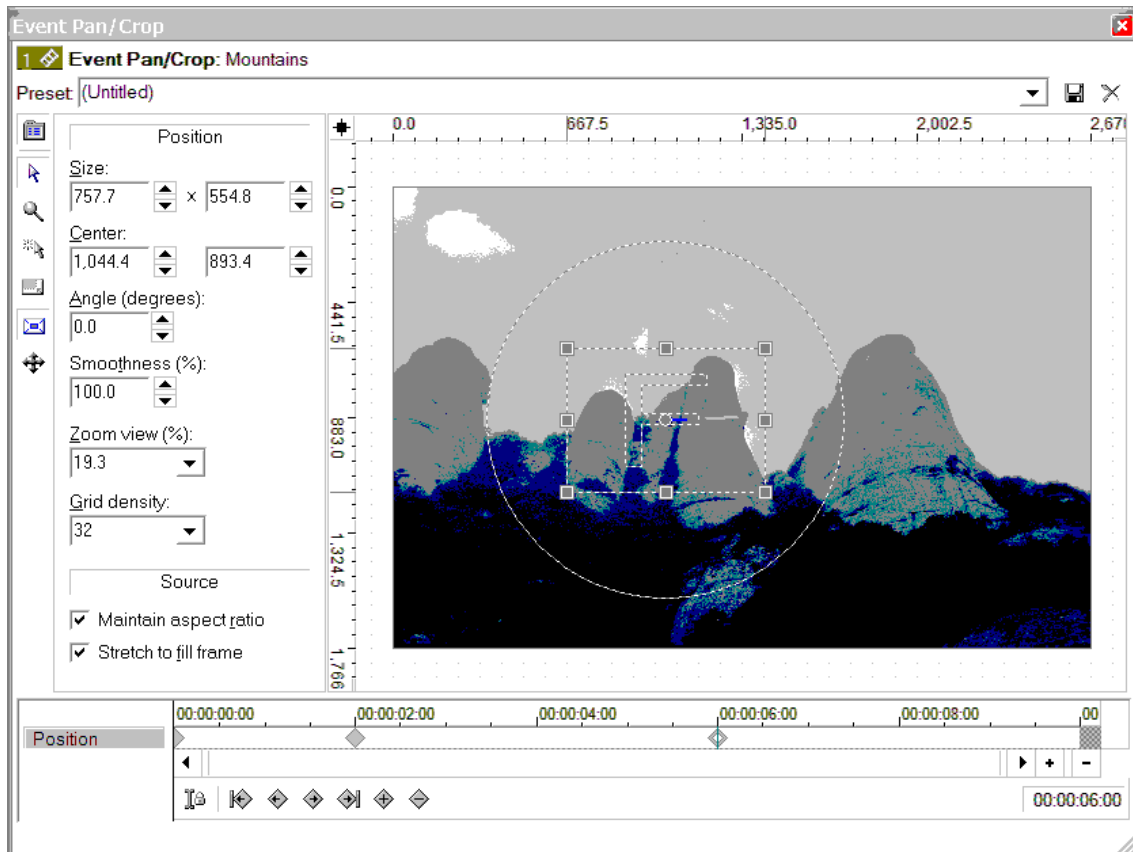
- ❖ Place a still image on a video track and adjust the time to 10 seconds if necessary.
- ❖ Click on the event's Pan/Crop button.

- ❖ You see the Event Pan/Crop dialog box as follows:



Here's how we would achieve our objective:

- ❖ Make sure the lock to timeline button is NOT selected
- ❖ Click in the keyframe line at the 4 sec mark. You see a flashing blue line (the time cursor). NB – Do NOT double click.
- ❖ If necessary, drag the time cursor to exactly 4:00:00 as indicated by the time clock at the bottom right of the dialog box. You may need to click on the zoom timeline buttons if you find this difficult.
- ❖ With the time cursor positioned, click on the ADD key. This adds a keyframe at this time. It appears as a grey diamond.
- ❖ OOPS – this should have been at 2:00:00 seconds. Place the mouse pointer over the keyframe and it changes to a pointing finger. Drag the mouse pointer to 2:00:00 seconds.
- ❖ Insert a second keyframe at 6:00:00 seconds.
- ❖ Use the handles on the image to zoom into your image as required – see the next diagram:



- ❖ Now click on the GO TO PREVIOUS KEY icon and you see that the selection box is restored to its previous size and position.
- ❖ Close the dialog box and play back the video.

#### **4 Variations on a theme**

That's the fundamentals of keyframing, but there are some important variations to know about:

- ❖ When you work with a video clip rather than a still image, the positioning of the keyframes is usually critically dependent on the content of the video – you want to work by looking at the video and then add keyframes at precise frames. You can achieve this by selecting the LOCK TO TIMELINE button in the keyframe window. With this button selected, you can see the video in the Event Pan/Crop dialog box, AND every time you make an adjustment (to the pan, zoom, or other effect) a keyframe is added automatically. This can be a two edged sword, because if you have this option selected and fiddle, you can end up with dozens of keyframes that you didn't want!
- ❖ There is often a requirement to vary the way that Vegas interpolates between keyframes. The default is to interpolate in a linear fashion, but you can change this by clicking right on a keyframe marker and choosing from the short-cut menu. The alternatives are: LINEAR, FAST, SLOW, SMOOTH, SHARP, and HOLD.