MLSlide v3.10
Instructions & Help issue 2

The information in this document supersedes any previous issue, including the Help document embedded within the program.

Contents

Introduction

This application is an electronic 'entry form' which enables Club member to create competition entries for the MagicLantern program. The saved entry file is given or sent to the competition secretary to be imported into the competition.

There are versions available for both Windows and Macintosh computers.

The illustrations in this document are taken from the Windows version but the Macintosh versions are similar in most instances. Where there are differences they are noted in the text.

There are four types of competition catered for;
- **Club** which is the normal type of competition for club members
- **Panel** in which three images on a theme are presented
- **Interclub** for competitions between clubs
- **Interclub Panel** as Panel but for interclub competitions

The media used during a competition can be either digital images (PDI) or Prints. Digital images are entered for the Print competitions as it is helpful for the projectionist and scorers to see the image when using the MagicLantern program. They can also be projected for the audience to view, but the judge should only refer to the presented print. The PDI of the print can be the digital image the print was made from or a scan or photograph of the actual print if it is not from a digital source. If a digital version of the print is not available then a default style placeholder image is used, which is the entry title text on a black background.

As there is no image editing available in this program the image files should be prepared in advance. The requirements for image file size and colourspace will be issued by the camera club or competition organiser. The filename of the image file will be used as the entry title. Review the information at the end of this document for a suggested workflow for editing images.

In most cases a camera club will issue a Competition Definitions file to replace the default list included in this program. This file will also set the required maximum image size and if allowed by the club competition rules, activate the Resize function in the program. Please see the **Competition Definitions File** section for details or follow any instructions issued with the Definitions file.

The club or author name used should be consistent over separate competition entries as MagicLantern uses the supplied name to identify entries during a competition. For example *J Smith* and *John Smith* will be seen as two separate persons even if they are name styles used by the same person. Also *J Smith* will identify both *John Smith* and *June Smith* as the same person.

If an existing submission file is opened then the club or author name is checked against a saved list and if not present it will be added to the list. Please see the **Manage Names** section for details on managing the names list.

When an image entry is selected in the entry list details of the image are displayed below the Preview window. These include the filename and size of the image file and the image pixel size. If the image size exceeds the specified maximum size then a warning message is also shown. Oversized images should be removed from the competition by deleting the entry and a suitably resized image should then be re-entered. Please be aware that an oversize image may be rejected by MagicLantern and not included in the competition.

The only exception to this is for a **Custom** competition where the image size allowed may be greater than the specified dimensions. In this case check that the actual size is within the allowed size and ignore the warning.

With Panel competition each entry consists of a set of 4 images. Three are the presented images and should be arranged in the order required. The fourth is a composite preview image showing the three images arranged horizontally with image 1 on the left, image 2 in the centre and image 3 on the right. This composite image is used by the MagicLantern program to preview the panel and the image files can be viewed individual. A composite can be created by the author and used to replace the auto created default. This replacement image should conform to the image requirement as regards size, colourspace etc. It should contain the three supplied images in the same left-right or top-bottom order of image1, image2 and image3.

The Program Window

When MLSlide is launched the program window is displayed as shown below.
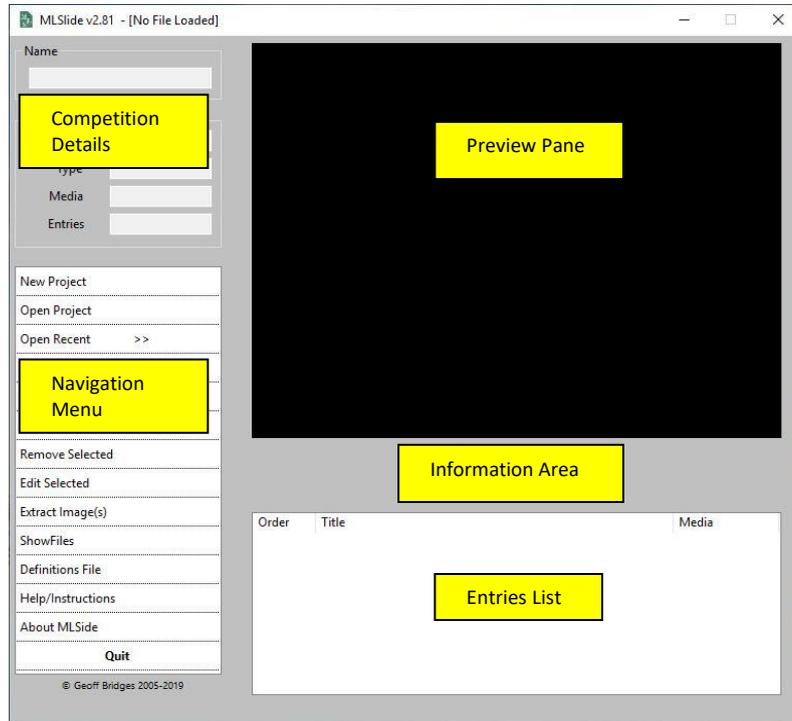
- The program functions are selected from the Navigation Menu at the left of the program window. These are explained in more detail below.
- The preview pane displays the image for the selected entry.
- The entries are listed in the Entries List below the preview pane.
- When a submission file is loaded or created the competition details are shown in the Competition Details area, top left.
- Details of the selected entry or other information will be displayed in the information area below the preview window.

The filename of the current submission file is displayed in the title bar at the top of the window.

When an entry is selected in the Entries list the entry image is shown in the preview pane. If the entry is a digital image then the image filename and file size is shown below the preview along with the image size in pixels. If the image size exceeds the specified maximum then a warning is also shown.

For Panel and Interclub Panel competitions the preview pane will be split into 4 quarters. Top left is the Composite preview image with Image 1 top right. The bottom row has image 2 to the left and Image 3 on the right. Click on any image and it will expand to fill the preview pane. Click again on the image or move the mouse pointer out of the preview area to return to the previous layout.

When the image is expanded information on the image is displayed below the preview window.
If the entry is a digital image then the image filename and file size is shown along with the image size in pixels.
 If the image size exceeds the specified maximum then a warning is also shown.

Navigation menu

Create a New Project

Create a new submission file. See Create a New Project in the next section for more details.

Open an Existing Project

Open an existing submission file to enable further editing or review. Browse to the file required and open it. An existing file can also be opened by dragging it onto the MLSlide window, or by double clicking on it, which will then open MLSlide.

Open a Recent Project

Lists the last five opened project files with the latest at the top. If a file cannot be found at the expected location it will be removed from the list. Click on an item in the list to open it. There is also an option to clear the list and a check box to automatically open the last used file. Click on this check box to toggle the action On or Off.

Save a Copy of the Current Project

This will save the current project file as a copy. The save location defaults to the desktop with the same filename as the existing file with 'Copy' added. The location and file name can be changed if required before committing the save. This is advisable if you are changing any of the entry information and may need to revert to the original later.

Show File Locations

This opens a dialog showing the location of the related program files. These are the current project file, if any; the application preferences file and the competition definitions folder. Clicking on the file-path shown will open the relevant folder.

Add Image(s) to Project

Inset image entries into the project file. Images can also be entered by dragging onto the program window. See the later section on inserting images for more details, especially for Panel and Print entries. Note that Print entries without a digital copy **must** use this method of entry.

Remove Selected Image(s)

Remove the selected entry or entries in the list from the project. Pressing the Delete key on the keyboard will also delete the selected entries. Please note that any deleted entries are removed permanently from the project file and cannot be recovered unless a copy of the file has been previously saved.

Edit Selected Entry Title

Edit the selected entry title text. For Interclub competitions you can also add or edit the authors' name. The edit dialog can also be entered by double clicking on the entry in the list.

Extract Selected Image(s)

Extract the currently select image and saves it as a jpeg file. If the current submission type is Panel or Interclub Panel then the four images are saved. The default location for the extracted image files is on the desktop in a folder with the competition name.

Manage Names

Add, edit or remove stored names. See the later section for full details.

Manage Definitions File

Load or replace the Competitions Definitions file. See the later section for full details

Help/Instructions

Display this help document.

About MLSlide

Display information about this program.

New Submission File

Start a new submission file by selecting **Create a New Project** from the Navigation menu.

In the dialogue that opens, select the Author and Competition from the drop-down lists. If the required name is not listed then type it into the text box and it will be automatically added to the list of available names. If the competition type is Interclub then the club name should be entered in the name field.

Selecting one of the pre-set competitions will automatically set the competition type, the media required and the maximum number of entries. The competitions available will be different to the default list as shown if a Definitions file has been installed. See the Competition Definitions File section for more details.

If the required competition is not listed then the competition details can be set-up manually by selecting **Custom** from the competition list. In this case provide an identifying title for the competition and select the competition type and media type. Enter the maximum number of images allowed in the Entries box. A value of zero here means there is no limit to the number of entries allowed.

Click OK to accept the submission file data and save the file. The images can now be entered into the submission file.

Adding the Entries to a Submission file

This section describes the methods for adding the image entries for a competition. See the next section for editing and organising the entries.

MagicLantern can be used to present competitions for club members and also for competitions between clubs. MLSlide can provide entry submissions for either of these scenarios. The requirements for both are similar, but interclub competitions have an extra (optional) input field for the image authors name, which is a requirement for some competitions. Both Club and Interclub competitions can be in PDI (digital images) or Print versions. Both can also have Panel versions, each of which can also be PDI or Print.

MagicLantern provides the option of conducting Print competitions where the physical prints are judged but the program is used to compile the scores etc. In these cases a digital version of the print is inserted into the MLSlide entry, which assists the projectionist in recognising the entry during the competition. In some instances the digital images may be projected for the audiences benefit, but the judge must not refer to the projected image.

If the competition has a maximum number of entries set, then when that number of entries has been reached no more entries will be allowed. If the entries value is set to zero then there is no maximum for image entries.

When an image is entered, the image filename (minus the .jpg file extension) is used as the entry title; this can be changed or edited later if necessary.

The entry procedure is similar in each case but as there some subtle differences they will be described separately.

Club and Interclub competitions
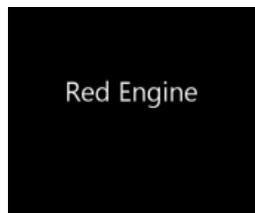
PDI Competitions
There are two ways to enter an image into an MLSlide project file for PDI competitions.

1. The first method to add an image is to select 1 or more image files in an open folder and drag and drop them on to the list to add them to the competition.
2. The second method is to select **Add Image(s) to Project** from the navigation menu. This will open a file browser. Browse to the location of the image files required. You can select more than one file if required. Press Cancel to return without adding an image. Click on Open to add the selected files to the project list.

Print Competition
Adding a Print entry is similar to the above method for PDI images, but there is an additional option for instances where a digital version of the print is not available.

1. The first method to add an image is to select a group of image files in an open folder and drag and drop them on to the list to add them to the competition.
2. Selecting **Add Print Image(s) to Project** from the navigation menu will present you with two options; Select Print Image File and Insert Print Placeholder.
   a. **Select Print Image File**: This will open a file browser. Browse to the location of the image files required. You can select more than one file if required, or press Cancel to return without adding an image. Click on Open to add the selected files to the project list.
   b. **Insert Print Placeholder**: This option will insert a placeholder for the image file. You will be prompted to enter a title for this entry and a proxy image will be created for it. This proxy image is the title supplied by the author, on a black background as in the example shown right. This proxy image can be replaced with the image file later by either dragging the image file onto the preview window or by right-clicking on the proxy image displayed on the preview window and selecting **Add Image** from the context menu. Select the image file required to replace the proxy image.

Panel and Interclub Panel Competitions

With a Panel competition each entry consists of a set of 4 images. Three are the presented images and should be arranged in the order required. The fourth is a composite preview image showing the three images. This composite image is used by the MagicLantern program to preview the panel and the image files can be viewed individual critique if the judge desires.

The composite image is created by the program from the three images supplied and is initially in the format shown right. This image can be replaced with one created by the author but it must contain the three panel images.

Where an image has not yet been inserted for a position in the panel set a placeholder image will be used. For PDI competitions this will be 'IMAGE (n)' where (n) is the position number on a black background. Print competitions will have the panel set title text, again with the position number added on a black background. In both cases these placeholder images can be replaced later.

The procedure for both Club and Interclub Panel competition entries is the same except for the inclusion of the option for the image author's name in Interclub Panels. The entry methods for PDI or Print images is the same; PDI competitions must have all 4 images present, but with Print competitions placeholder images are acceptable although digital images of the print are preferred.

Create the Panel set and add images

There are three ways to create a panel set and insert the images.

1. The first method to add an image is to select a group of 1 to 3 image files in an open folder and drag and drop them on to the list to add them to the database. If one image is selected and dropped onto the list then this will be placed into the first position and its filename will be used as the panel set title. When 2 or 3 images are dropped onto the list then positions 1&2 or 1, 2 &3 will be filled. Placeholder images will be used for the other positions.

2. Selecting **Add a Panel Set to Project** from the navigation menu will present you with two options; Select Panel Image Files and Insert a Panel Set.

   a. **Select Panel Image Files**: This will open a file browser. Browse to the location of the image files required. You can select a group of 1 to 3 image files, or press Cancel to return without adding any images. Click on Open to add the selected files to the project list. If one image is selected then this will be placed into the first position and its filename will be used as the panel set title. When 2 or 3 images selected then positions 1&2 or 1, 2 &3 will be filled. Placeholder images will be used for the other positions.

   b. **Insert a Panel Set**: This option will insert a panel set with placeholders for the image files. You will be prompted to enter a title for this panel set and placeholder images will be created for it. The placeholder images are the title supplied by the author, on a black background.

Where placeholder images have been created they can be replaced with an image file by either dragging the image file onto the placeholder or by right-clicking on the proxy image displayed on the preview window and selecting **Replace Image** from the context menu, which opens a file browser. Select the image file required to replace the proxy image.

It should be noted that in the above dragging/dropping operations that the exact order of images placed is not guaranteed to be the order in which they were selected, although in most cases the image under the mouse pointer will be placed in the first position.

Editing and Organising the Image Entries

Club and Interclub competition entries

Select a row in the entry list by clicking on it. The image for that entry will be shown in the preview window. Below the preview window the image filename and file size and the image pixel dimensions will be displayed. If the image size exceeds the maximum required then a warning will be shown. If the Resize function has been activated then an image can be resized by right clicking (Control Click for Mac OS versions) on it and selecting the resize option.

- Double clicking the selected row will allow the title text to be edited or changed. For interclub competitions you can also add or edit the author names.
- The list order can be changed by selecting the entry and dragging the row to a new position in the list. This allows the author to adjust the order in which the images are presented in during the competition.
- An entry can be removed by selecting it and pressing the **Delete** key or selecting **Remove Selected Image(s)** from the navigation menu.
- For Print competitions the selected placeholder image can be replaced with an image file by right clicking on the preview image and selecting **Replace Image** or by dragging an image file onto the preview window.

Panel and Interclub Panel competition entries

Select a row in the entry list by clicking on it. The four images of the set will be displayed with the composite image in the top left corner, as shown right.

Clicking on one of the four displayed images will enlarge it to fill the preview window. Below the image the image filename and file size and the image pixel dimensions will be displayed. If the image size exceeds the maximum required then a warning will be shown. Click on the image or move the mouse pointer out of the preview window to return the display to the four images.

- Double clicking the selected row will allow the panel set title text to be edited or changed. For interclub competitions you can also add or edit the author names.
- The list order can be changed by selecting the entry and dragging the row to a new position in the list. This allows the author to adjust the order in which the panels are presented in during the competition.
- A panel set can be removed by selecting it in the list and pressing the **Delete** key or selecting **Remove Selected Panels(s)** from the navigation menu.
- When the set of 4 images is displayed then a placeholder image can be replaced with an image file by right clicking on the placeholder and selecting **Replace Image** or by dragging an image file onto the placeholder in the preview window.
- If an image is in the wrong position in the panel set then right clicking on it will present the option to **Move Image**. Click on this and select the destination position. The default composite image will be updated to reflect any changes.
- The default composite image can be replaced with a user created image by right clicking on the composite image and selecting **Add Image** or by dragging an image file onto the composite in the preview window. Right clicking on the composite again will allow you to return back to the default image.

Manage Names

This window shows the list of Authors or Club names.

A new name can be entered into the list by clicking on **Add a new Name** and typing the name into the list or an existing name removed by selecting it in the list and clicking on **Remove Name**.

A name can be edited by double clicking on the entry in the list.

Note that a name entered in the New File dialogue is automatically entered into the list, as is a name from an existing project file opened in this program if the name is not already present.
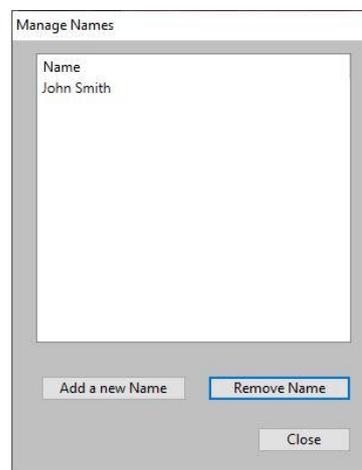
Competition Definitions File
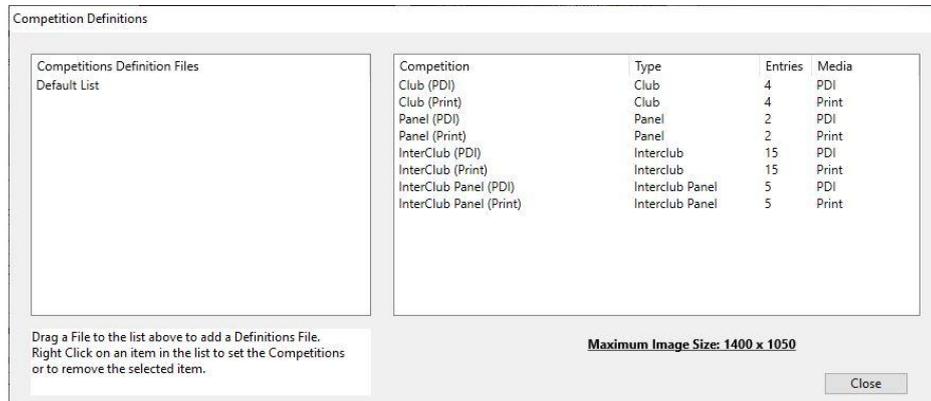
Competitions List

The list of competitions is shown here for reference only and it cannot be edited by the user. It shows the competition name, type and the maximum number of entries allowed for that competition. If the Entries is shown as 0 (zero) then there is no limit to the number of entries allowed per author in that competition. The image above shows the default list of competitions. Also shown below the list is the Maximum Image Size for the submitted images.

Although the default list of competitions, along with the 'Custom' option in the Create New dialog allows for any competition type to be catered for, most clubs will want to provide a dedicated list of competitions for their members use and set the image size to suit their projection requirements. A setting in this file can also be set to enable the Resize function in MLSlide. This can be created in the MagicLantern program itself and then made available to the club members. If the competition list has to be revised due to additional competitions or a change in the number of entries etc then a new list will be issued by the club and an updated definitions file made available.

To add this Competition Definitions File to MLSlide, drag the file to the list on the left side of the window. This will add the file to the list as shown below.
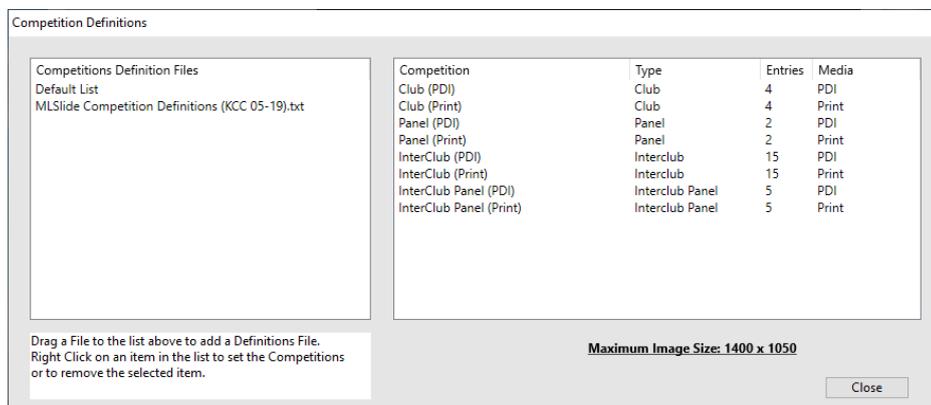

To set the file as the new definitions list, right click on the file in the list and select 'Set as Definitions' from the context menu. There is also an option in the menu to remove the file from the list if it is no longer required.

Right clicking on the **Default List** entry will give the option to reset to the default competition list.

PDI workflow guide

This is a brief guide for preparing digital images for MagicLantern and MLSlide. It assumes an image processing program such as Photoshop is used. Other image processing software will have similar features, please read the instructions for your application for details.

➢ Save a **copy** of your image file before and after any image processing has been completed. The original files are then preserved untouched.

➢ If necessary convert to an 8-bit depth RGB file.

➢ If necessary convert to sRGB colour space.

➢ If necessary rotate the image to 'Normal' orientation. Please note that many image viewers will often show Portrait style images auto-rotated to the normal position. In MLSlide or MagicLantern these images will be displayed as 'Sideways' or truncated vertically and positioned to the left of the screen as shown below.
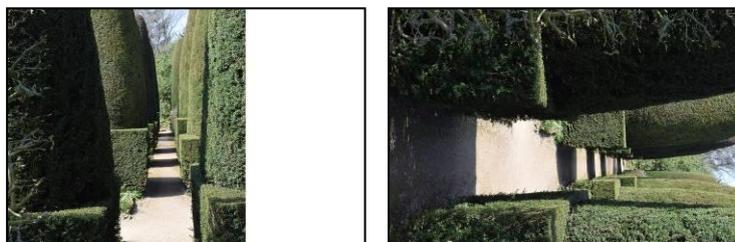
➢ Size the file to match the size required. This will be stated in the rules for digital competitions. The default for MagicLantern and MLSlide is 1400 x 1050 pixels, and these values will be used for this example.

Resizing may be done by using **File>Automate>Fit Image** in **Photoshop**, or **Image>Resize** in **Photoshop Elements**. Note that the ppi (pixels per inch) setting is irrelevant for projection, and may be left at any value; however large ppi settings result in a larger file-size. A resolution of 90 to 120 ppi is usually acceptable. If reducing the ppi setting brings the width AND height of the image below 1400 x 1050, then use a higher ppi setting.

➢ Ensure that '**Constrain Proportions***' or '**Maintain Aspect Ratio**' is selected.

➢ Set the width OR height to the required value. If the other value is then greater than its maximum then set that value. For example, if setting the width to 1400 gives a height greater than 1050 then set the height.
Generally for landscape images; set the width,
    for portrait images; set the height.

Many images will not fit the width/height dimensions exactly. It is not necessary to fill any blank space with black; this is done automatically when the image is projected.

➢ If required, apply any sharpening with your preferred method when the image is at its final size.

➢ Save the image as a jpg file.

➢ When saving the file, using the entry title as the filename can be useful as it will then be auto inserted when the image is entered into MLSlide.

Important

Please note that although the Resize function may be available in MLSlide if it has been activated by a club-issued Competition Definitions file, better results can be achieved by resizing with an image editing application. Resizing in MLSlide will remove the effect of any sharpening applied to the image and may introduce artefacts, pixel blocking or other issues in the image.