

Downloading Sessions to Photosonix products

The capability of downloading sessions to a Light/Sound device can greatly expand the usefulness of the device, and allows it to be set up for special situations, personal preferences, etc. We sometimes get calls from people who are having problems downloading for a variety of reasons, this article is intended to give some background information and helpful hints to make downloading go more smoothly.

What is Downloading

Downloading is a computer term that refers to transferring information from one computer to another. The term downloading is generally used when a larger or host computer is transferring information to a satellite or smaller computer, uploading is generally used when the smaller computer is transferring information to the larger computer. The difference in terms is usually inconsequential.

In the case of light/sound sessions, there are two levels of downloading:

1. Sessions and software can be downloaded from the Photosonix web site (www.photosonix.com) to a personal PC computer. This process is the same as any download from the web, and is supported by your browser and by software from a large number of vendors, mostly available free.
2. Sessions can be downloaded from your PC to a downloadable Photosonix machine (Nova Pro, Nova Pro 100, Muse#, or Pro Tutor). This process is controlled by Photosonix software, either Light/Sound Librarian, Light/Sound Designer, or Light/Sound Designer 100. Light/Sound Librarian is available via a free web download. Light/Sound Designer 100 is furnished with the Nova Pro 100.

Both types of downloading will be discussed here.

Organizing Directories, Photosonix software

Sessions on your computer

Photosonix distributes light/sound sessions and libraries, and software for supporting session creation and downloading. This software will work no matter how you organize the folders on your computer, but it is set up with certain assumptions and following those assumptions will make it easier to get things working.

Create a light/sound folder LS at the top level on your hard disk – this will normally be C:\LS. Light/Sound Librarian, Light/Sound Designer, and the supporting HELP files should go in this LS folder. For each session library, create a folder inside the LS folder with the name of the library. For example, the learning library would go in folder LRNLIB in the LS folder. Each session library consists of a number of light/sound session (.LSS) files, and a light/sound library (.LSL) file. The library file is a list of the sessions in the library, with the folder (path) information that allows Light/Sound Librarian to find the sessions on the hard disk.

If you choose to store the sessions in a different folder structure or with different folder names, the main consequence is that the library files will no longer have correct pointers to the sessions. When you open the library in Librarian, you will see a warning message that some of the file pointers are not correct. Light/Sound Librarian has a menu function, **Edit-Path Check**, that will assist in locating the sessions and correcting the library file pointers. In Light/Sound Librarian, click **Edit** on the menu bar, then click **Path Check**. Path Check will call out the first problem session and ask if you want to correct the pointer. If you say OK, it will search the nearby folders for the session file. Answer the questions, and all sessions will soon be located and the library pointers corrected. If you have stored the sessions far from the library in the folder structure, the Path Check function may not be able to find them. In this case, take the option of finding the first session yourself, and Path Check will then have a new place to look for the remaining sessions. Be sure to save the corrected library file.

Downloading from the Internet

On the Photosonix web site there is a Download page. Starting from the Home page, there is a “Download” link on the left side of the page, and also a “Download Session Software [Here](#)”. Click on the Download link, or on the “Here” in the second message, to get to the Download page. The links on this page allow you to download Light/Sound Librarian, and/or the Fun&Games, Learning, and Meditation/Creativity session libraries. Additional libraries are being added bimonthly, so all Photosonix libraries will be available from the web, free of charge, after a few months. Third party libraries, such as the Ruth Olmstead and Art Leidecker sessions, will continue to be available on floppy disk on a paid basis.

To download sessions to your Light/Sound machine, you will need Light/Sound Librarian. If you don’t already have it, then step 1 on the Download page, “Do you have a copy of Librarian?”, has a [click here to download](#) link. Farther down the page are “Click here to Download Learning Library Sessions”, and similar links for the Fun&Games and Meditation/Creativity libraries.

When you click on any of these links, the selected item will be downloaded to your computer, and a window will open asking you where you want to store the file. The default selection will typically be the “My Downloaded Files” folder. This is a good place to put it, as the downloaded file is a compressed intermediate file (*.zip extension).

All downloads transfer a compressed intermediate file (*.ZIP extension) to your computer. You will need a decompression (unzip) program, such as Winzip or Ezip, to extract and store the actual files you want. The Photosonix download page has a link ([WINZIP](#)) to a web site that allows you to download a free copy of Ezip for this purpose. This is a handy program to have, a lot of downloaded material is available in the ZIP format. After downloading Ezip, run it, load the downloaded ZIP file (LSLIB.ZIP, F&GLIB.ZIP, LRNLIB.ZIP, or MDCRLIB.ZIP, and do an EXTRACT ALL function. You will be asked where to put the extracted files – if you are extracting the librarian (LSLIB.ZIP), put it in the LS folder. If you are extracting one of the library files, put it in a folder within the LS folder, with the same name as the library (e.g., extract LRNLIB.ZIP to the c:\LS\LRNLIB folder).

Downloading to a Light/Sound Machine

Once you have Light/Sound Librarian and a session library on your computer, you can download to your light/sound machine. The rest of this article covers this process.

Connect the Download Cable

First you need to find and identify a COM port on your computer. The download cable shipped with your system has a 9 pin mini-D connector that will fit the COM port connector on current computers. If you have an older computer, your COM port may have a similar appearing connector, but with 25 pins. If so, you will need a 25 pin to 9 pin Modem adapter, available at computer stores for about \$5. Connect the cable (with the adapter if appropriate) to the COM port connector on your computer. Connect the stereo jack end of the download cable to the download connector on the L/S machine (srl on the Muse# and Pro Tutor, RS232 on the Nova Pro, COM on the Nova Pro 100).

Load the Library File into Light/Sound Librarian

Run the Light/Sound Librarian program, click the introductory message windows to clear them, until a blank window with the title “Photosonix Light/Sound Librarian” and a menu line is displayed. On the Menu line, click **File**, then **Open**. An Open File dialog box will appear. You must select the library you want to open. The folders panel should show C:\LS and some library folders. If not, double click the C: drive designation to get a list of all first level folders, then double click the LS folder, then double click the desired library folder, then (in the file name panel on the left side of the window) double click the *.LSL file in this folder. That will open the library in the Librarian program. If you have opted to use a different folder structure, modify these instructions to find the library you want in your folder structure.

Read the Librarian Help File

The Help system in the Librarian has a lot of information about downloading to a light/sound machine, and is worth reading. It is always available as a reminder when you are using the Librarian.

Finding the right COM port.

Once you have a library (*.LSL) file loaded in Librarian, click the Librarian **Download** menu item, and then the **Select COM Port** item. This gives you a choice of four COM ports, of which your computer probably only has two (COM1 and COM2). If you don't know which COM port your cable is connected to, you will have to guess at the numbers until you find the right one. Click a COM port selection. If the selected COM port is internally connected to a modem or printer, Windows will usually tell you the COM port is unavailable. Try another one. When you find a COM port that Windows allows you to access, try the download (details follow below). If there is no response from your light/sound machine, try another port. When communication is established, record the number of the COM port. It is the wired in COM port number of the connector you are using on your computer. We have never seen a computer where the manufacturer labels the connectors. The Librarian remembers the COM port you have selected, so once you find the right port, there is no need to change the selection again.

Downloading options

The download menu item gives you four options for downloading:

- download session append – download a selected session, and append it to whatever sessions are already downloaded.
- download library append – download all the sessions in the current library, appending them to whatever sessions have already been downloaded.
- download session clear – download a selected session, after clearing any previously downloaded sessions.
- download library clear – download all the sessions in the current library, after clearing any previously downloaded sessions.

The download clear options clear only downloaded sessions, the built-in sessions are not disturbed. The recommended procedure is to use **download library clear**, and to use the **Print Library** function to get a listing of the downloaded sessions. The other functions are available for special situations and may occasionally be useful, but download library clear should be your workhorse function. (see special notes for the Nova Pro 100).

If you just want to download a single session without bothering with a library, do a **File – New** menu action to create a new (dummy) library, then press the **Add Session** button in the upper right hand corner of Librarian, and add the session. Click the session name to select it, and do a Download Session Append (or Clear) download. Don't save the dummy library.

Which Light/Sound Machine do you Have?

You must tell Light/Sound Librarian which type of Light/Sound machine you are downloading. There is a Device selection box on the left side of the Librarian window, Click it and select the device you are downloading.

Download capacity

All Photosonix machines have a limited amount of storage for session segments, and also a limited amount of storage for the session index. The Nova Pro 100 has room for up to 100 sessions, and up to 1000 session segments. The other machines have room for up to 25 sessions, and 250 session segments. If you are downloading small sessions, you may run into the session limit first, but normally the segment limit is the controlling factor in the size of downloads. The librarian displays the total segment count of all sessions in the current library, and issues a warning if it exceeds the limit. If you use the download library clear function, then you can be sure of having enough room. (see special notes for the Nova Pro 100)

Prepare the Light/Sound Machine for Downloading

Turn the L/S machine on. The Nova Pro 100 is immediately ready for downloading, the other machines must be placed in the download mode. To get the other machines in the download mode: Nova Pro – press the DOWN arrow key until dnL is displayed, Muse# and Pro Tutor - press the UP arrow key until dL is displayed. Once dnL or dL is displayed, press PLAY or ENTER, all lights will go out, and the machine is ready for downloading.

Start the Download

Once the Light/Sound machine is ready for downloading, start the download by clicking the appropriate function in the Librarian Download menu (normally Download Clear). You will get a dialog box reminding you that this will clear all previously downloaded sessions, click ok.

If you have selected the correct COM port, communication will be established, and the LEDs on the L/S machine will blink during the download. If the lights do not blink, wait for the machine to time out (about 20 seconds from the time you pressed Enter or Play to clear the display), press Enter or Play to clear the error message, select a different COM port, and start over at the previous paragraph.

Things that can go wrong

On all machines except the Nova Pro 100, if 20 seconds elapses after you press Enter or Play to make the lights go out, and the download does not start, the machine will indicate a timeout error. Press Enter or Play to clear the message, and try again.

If you are doing a Download Append, it is possible to run out of storage during the download. Reduce the size of the download and try again.

It is possible to get a checksum error if the data transmission loses bits. The cable is short and the data rate slow, so this seldom happens. Wipe the stereo jack end of the computer cable with a soft cloth to remove any contamination, and try again.

Read the Librarian Help – Download page to see the error messages for the various errors

Special Notes for the Nova Pro 100

The Nova Pro 100 has some additional features. There is a capacity of 100 downloaded sessions and 1000 session segments. To make this large number of sessions easier to find, they are organized by Session Type – when you download a library, all sessions are loaded into the same session type, and the session type must be selected before you can download. If you wish to download more than one type of session, separate downloads are required, and downloads after the first should be Download Append functions.

The Nova Pro 100 has two way communication with the Librarian, making determination of the COM port easier. When downloading a Nova Pro 100, an extra button appears on the Select Com Port dialog – “NP100?”. Clicking this button will interrogate the Nova Pro 100 if it is connected to the currently selected COM port, and a message is returned to the operator, either “Nova Pro 100 not found” (meaning the correct COM port has not been selected) or a message with the software release level of the Nova Pro 100, and the remaining download capacity of the machine will be displayed. With this function, you do not have to attempt a download to find out if you have selected the right COM port.

The Nova Pro 100 does not have to be in the dL or dnL mode for downloading. When you turn it on, it comes up displaying “P01”, and is ready for downloading with no further action. It cannot download while playing a session, or while displaying a status message. Double click Play to end a session, single click Play to clear a status message, to get the machine ready for downloading..

Summary

Once you get the hang of it, downloading is quite easy. The detailed instructions come out long because of trying to cover all eventualities. I hope this writeup helps you get over the initial hurdles.