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# Multicam PC

United Media, <http://www.unitedmediainc.com>  
Contact: 365 Digital, 0870 1646 365  
£449 plus VAT



If you work with synced multi camera shoots, there's no quicker way of editing.

### Digit rating



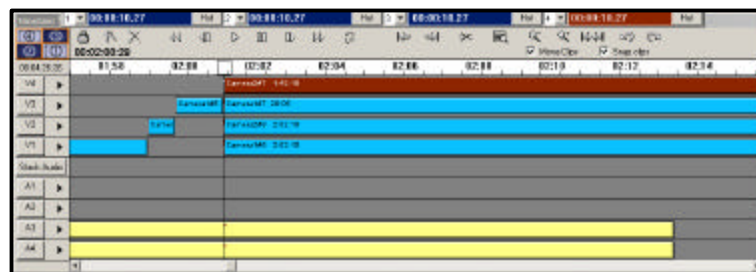
- Features:**
- ✂ Views up to Four cameras simultaneously
  - ✂ Hot Track indicator for easy viewing of currently selected source
  - ✂ Camera syncing by timecode or markers
  - ✂ Runs under Matrox RT2500/2000 and all DigiSuite systems

It's not often that you encounter a product that's truly unique – but Multicam definitely fits the bill. It's based on the standout feature of United Media's high-end On-line Express – a Windows NT- and DigiSuite-based real-time editing suite, also called Multicam. On-line Express was aimed at editors who felt most comfortable with live-broadcast production switchers and pre-NLE editing systems such as Lightworks – and the new, standalone version of Multicam brings this philosophy to users of Matrox's most popular hardware. It runs on the RT2500 (which we tested), RT2000, DigiSuite LX, DigiSuite LE, DigiSuite DTV, or DigiSuite Full (other hardware to follow, according to United Media) and uses Adobe Premiere as its beginning and end points.

### Quartet of tracks

In a nutshell, Multicam lets you create edits that cut between up to four tracks of video (plus their associated audio) as if using a switcher. You capture each camera's footage into a single clip and place each clip on tracks Video 1A, 1B, 2 and 3 (plus Audio 1A, 1B, 2 and 3) in Premiere. Save this as a new project, quit Premiere, boot up Multicam and open the project.

Multicam's interface looks like a severely cut-down version of the standard NLE interface. What first grabs you are the four monitors, which isn't hard when there's only a timeline and the standard Office-style menu on the screen with it. You align your clips using their timecodes – if you used jam sync timecode while shooting – or using clip markers that you set yourself. Once aligned, you hit go and switch between each track as you see fit by clicking the screens or hitting buttons. Once complete you can go back and edit this, although only by moving the placement of the cuts. When you're finished, you can then save your results as another Premiere project, from where you can edit as usual – adding transitions, titles and all of the usual flashy extras. Useful features here include automatic overlap addition (for dissolves rather than cuts) and condensing the timeline down to the Video 1A and 1B when exporting, so you can easily drop transitions in.



I wasn't impressed with the Multicam at first. We live in the world of non-linear editing. Why would we ever want to go back to the days of switchers unless we had to (such as for live events)? After using Multicam for a short while, however, I realized just how useful this tool is, albeit in limited circumstances.

Multicam is truly useful when you're editing footage that you want to look like a live event. While this has many applications, from large weddings to sports events, you'd have to be working on quite a few of these to justify the £450 cost. This is especially true for RT2500/2000 users, where it costs almost as much as the solution it works with. Releasing a version specifically for RT2500/2000 with a price around half what it is now would have made more sense.

However, in this specialist area Multicam excels. It does things you simply cannot do in Premiere, even on the latest real-time hardware. Four screens of video running at once, even if they're only previews, is very impressive and the reason why you need the Matrox hardware at the back. The only downside is that you can't make them too large before the frame-rate drops. And, as it uses the Matrox card for real-time video, even a powerful workstation won't help.

Multicam is a well-thought out tool that's truly a breed apart, but I can't help feeling that it would have worked better as a plug-in for Premiere.

If you work with synced multi-camera shoots, there's no quicker way of editing. An expensive option for low-end systems, though.

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