

Tape Magic allows the scheduled playback of tapes or portions of tapes from multiple VCRs

Tape Magic allows the scheduled playback of tapes or portions of tapes from multiple VCRs. Up to eight sets, called Channels can be scheduled to operate at any given time. Each Channel consists of up to 7 VCRs, controlled by an eight input A/V VCR switcher, and of course, a Tape Magic Schedule for their control via an eight IR output SWP board connected to IR Master Cybermate. Although up to eight channels can be implemented using eight SWP boards, the operation will be discussed assuming one channel, since the operation of each channel is identical. As a side note, since each channel has its own schedule, the only disadvantage to having / operating more than one channel at a time is if two scheduled events, from different schedules, occur at the same time. This results in a slight delay in one of the scheduled events since they can not be implemented simultaneously. If however you sequence the Channels, you can have up to 56 tapes play unattended. With this said, lets see how things operate with one channel.

CH 1 CH 2 CH 3

File Serial Port Print

Cassettes

- 000001 Tape 1
- 000002 Tape 2
- 000003 Tape 3
- 000004 Tape 4
- 000005 Tape 5
- 000006 new
- 000007 new
- 000008 new
- 000009 new

Add Cassette

Cassette 000001 Info

Name
Tape 1

Distributor
dist1

Cue Time
0:00:20

Play Time
0:25:00

Print Label

Start Now 11:41:42 AM Start At 12:00:00 AM Stop Clear

Cassette	Date	Step	Start Time	
000001	Tape 1	Thu	Play Tape 1	11:59:40 PM
	dist1	2/26/2004	Switch IRin 1	12:00:00 AM
	Cue: 0:00:20		Stop Tape 1	12:25:02 AM
	Play: 0:25:00		REW Tape 1	12:25:04 AM
000001	Tape 1	Fri	Play Tape 2	12:24:40 AM
	dist1	2/27/2004	Switch IRin 2	12:25:00 AM
	Cue: 0:00:20		Stop Tape 2	12:50:02 AM
	Play: 0:25:00		REW Tape 2	12:50:04 AM
000001	Tape 1	Fri	Play Tape 3	12:49:40 AM
	dist1	2/27/2004	Switch IRin 3	12:50:00 AM
	Cue: 0:00:20		Stop Tape 3	1:15:02 AM
	Play: 0:25:00		REW Tape 3	1:15:04 AM
000003	Tape 3	Fri	Play Tape 4	1:14:15 AM
	dist3	2/27/2004	Switch IRin 4	1:15:00 AM
	Cue: 0:00:45		Stop Tape 4	1:44:02 AM
	Play: 0:29:00		REW Tape 4	1:44:04 AM
000005	Tape 5	Fri	Play Tape 5	1:33:45 AM
	dist5	2/27/2004	Switch IRin 5	1:44:00 AM
	Cue: 0:10:15		Stop Tape 5	3:49:02 AM
	Play: 2:05:00		REW Tape 5	3:49:04 AM
000002	Tape 2	Fri	Play Tape 6	3:48:30 AM
	dist2	2/27/2004	Switch IRin 6	3:49:00 AM
	Cue: 0:00:30		Stop Tape 6	4:34:02 AM

Add Replace Load

Insert Remove

Save Today's Schedule Test Quit

Thursday, February 26, 2004

Shown above is Tape Magic's Main Schedule screen with a Channel 1 (CH 1) schedule displayed in it. The software / hardware setup for Channel 1 will be explained shortly, but it has 7 VCRs and a A/V switcher connected to a SWP's 8 IR outputs via "Stick-on emitters". First, lets go through the main screen functions.

The current Cassettes or VCR tapes available are listed upper left hand corner.

- To display the parameters for a cassette in the list, click on a cassette in the list. You will see the tape **Name**, **Distributor**, the **Cue Time** and the **Play Time**. When this tape is put into the schedule, and its time for it to play, (a) it will automatically fast forward for the cue time prior to play, (b) Play at the scheduled time for the Play time, (c) Stop, and (d) then rewind.
- You can add tapes to the list by selecting **Add Cassette**, then filling in the parameters for the material you wish to play. The Cue time you should enter, is the amount of time it takes the tape to fast forward to spot you want to play from its re-winded state. If more than one location on a tape is to be played (say 3 locations), then 3 cassettes should be added to the list (from the same tape), each with a different cue times and Play times.
- You can also print labels for the tape using **Print Label**.

Other Main Screen functions

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- Use **Add** to add a selected tape to the end of the displayed schedule
- Use **Insert** to place a selected tape at a highlighted place in in the schedule
- Use **Remove** to remove a highlighted tape from the schedule
- Use **Replace** to replace a highlighted tape in the schedule with a selected tape
- Use **Save Today's Schedule** to save a displayed schedule
- Use **Load** to place a previously saved schedule on the screen. A list will pop up for your selection. Any currently displayed schedule will be replaced.
- Use **Start Now** to start the the currently displayed schedule now
- With a time entry in the adjacent text box, use **Start At** so that the schedule will start at that time.
- Use **Stop** to stop the scheduler if it is running.
- Use **Clear** to clear out the displayed schedule.
- Use **Test** to immediately test a highlighted scheduled item.
- The **CH#** buttons across the top bring up other channels.
- Use the **Serial Port** menu to select the serial port that IR Master Cybermate is connected to. The baud rate is set to 115 Kbaud. This is the default baud rate used by Couch Potato and our WHAM software. If, for some reason you changed it using that software, you must back to that software and change it back. This is done in Hardware Setup for either Couch Potato, or WHAM.

Notes on Add, Insert, Remove, and Replace. When tapes are added, they are added in VCR order. That is to say, if you have 7 VCRs in a Channel the order of VCR play will always be VCR1, VCR2, VCR3, VCR4, VCR5, VCR5, VCR7. If you have more than seven scheduled tape plays in the schedule, the eighth one will be in VCR1, the 9th in VCR2 etc. This means that you will need to replace the tapes with the new ones before the play starts over again at VCR1. If you **Insert** a tape, all the tapes after it in in the schedule will be bumped up one VCR position. If you **Remove** a tape, all the tapes above it in in the schedule will be bumped down one VCR position.

For Hardware / Software Setup, select **Gear Setup** under the **File** menu.

Setup

CH 1 CH 2 CH 3

Gear	IR Out	Remote Assignment
VCR 1	1	VC GE 1
VCR 2	2	VCR SONY
VCR 3	3	SONY VCR
VCR 4	4	SONY VCR
VCR 5	5	SONY VCR
VCR 6	6	SONY VCR
VCR 7	7	JVC VCR
Switcher	8	SW JVC

Assign Number of VCRs for this Channel 7

Remote Database

- VCR 3
- SONY VCR
- JVC VCR
- Toshiba VCR
- SW empty
- VCR Toshiba
- VCR JVC LR
- SW JVC
- VCR SONY**
- SW CHASE
- VC GE 1

Assigned Remotes

Learn Test

VCR SONY

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	0
Enter		VCR/TV		
Play >		Stop		
CH Up		CH Dn		
Pause		Menu		
Display		Select		
Cursor Up		Cursor Dn		
Cursor Left		Cursor Right		
FF >>		<< REW		
SLO MO		FR ADV		
Record		Eject		
Reset		Input		
Timing >		Timing <		
VCR Plus		Speed		
Eject		X2		
ON		OFF		

Database Remotes

Create New VCR

Create New Switcher

Learn

Exit

Choose Remotes that will control your Gear in each applicable Channel.
If the Remote is not present in the Database, use 'Create'.

Gear Setup is where you select the number of Channels you have, the number of VCRs per channel, and the Remote Assignment for each VCR and Switcher. If the manufactures remote does not appear in the Remote Database, you can create a new one and teach it the IR commands from the manufacturer's remote. Note, before learning or testing can take place, make sure you have selected the correct serial port that Cybermate is connected to (under **Serial Port** on the Main screen)

- If you need to change the number of displayed channels, select the **Setup** menu and you will be prompted for the number of channels you have / want.

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This action requires that the application be restarted. So, after the change, restart Tape Magic and go back to Gear Setup.

- For each channel, make sure the **Number of VCRs for this Channel** is the correct number shown, if not change them now. Again, each change requires that the application be restarted.
- Now use **Assign** to assign each VCR and Switcher a remote form the **Remote Database**.
- If the needed remote type for the assignment is not in the list, use **Create** to create one. You will first be asked for a remote name, then a empty but labeled remote will appear. After you enter the name, **Learn** (on the right) becomes highlighted red. Now, for each desired IR function on the displayed remote, select it and a dialog appears saying "Waiting 10 Sec for IR form your remote". With the manufacture's remote about four inches form from the front-center of Cybermate, press the corresponding button on the manufacture's remote. If learning is successful, you will get a "Command Learned OK" response. Repeat for each desired function to be learned.
- If you have assigned an existing remote that does not have all the desired functions learned (or not learned correctly), you can teach it by pressing **Learn** (on the left) when it is displayed. Now teach the desired functions as discussed above. Doing the left side **Learn** only teaches the assigned remote and does **not** affect the database remote. If you wish to teach the database remote so that it can be assigned to several places, use the right hand **Learn**. You will then need to re-assign it to your equipment.
- You can also test learned commands using the **Test** button.

Once you have specified all your gear, return to Main screen by selecting Exit. The Main screen with the **V** button pressed is shown below.

The screenshot shows the 'Tape Magic' application window. On the left is a 'CH 1 Direct Control' panel with a 'VCR Select' section containing buttons 1-7, a 'SwInVCR' button, and playback controls: PLAY, STOP, << REW, FF >>, PAUSE, RECORD, and EJECT. The main area displays a cassette schedule table with columns for ID, Cassette, Date, Step, and Start Time. Below the table are buttons for 'Add', 'Replace', 'Load', 'Insert', 'Remove', 'Save Today's Schedule' (showing 'Thursday, February 26, 2004'), 'Test', and 'Quit'. A 'V' button is highlighted at the bottom left.

	Cassette	Date	Step	Start Time
000001	Tape 1	Thu	Play Tape 1	11:59:40 PM
	dist1	2/26/2004	Switch IRin 1	12:00:00 AM
	Cue: 0:00:20		Stop Tape 1	12:25:02 AM
	Play: 0:25:00		REW Tape 1	12:25:04 AM
000001	Tape 1	Fri	Play Tape 2	12:24:40 AM
	dist1	2/27/2004	Switch IRin 2	12:25:00 AM
	Cue: 0:00:20		Stop Tape 2	12:50:02 AM
	Play: 0:25:00		REW Tape 2	12:50:04 AM
000001	Tape 1	Fri	Play Tape 3	12:49:40 AM
	dist1	2/27/2004	Switch IRin 3	12:50:00 AM
	Cue: 0:00:20		Stop Tape 3	1:15:02 AM
	Play: 0:25:00		REW Tape 3	1:15:04 AM
000003	Tape 3	Fri	Play Tape 4	1:14:15 AM
	dist3	2/27/2004	Switch IRin 4	1:15:00 AM
	Cue: 0:00:45		Stop Tape 4	1:44:02 AM
	Play: 0:29:00		REW Tape 4	1:44:04 AM
000005	Tape 5	Fri	Play Tape 5	1:33:45 AM
	dist5	2/27/2004	Switch IRin 5	1:44:00 AM
	Cue: 0:10:15		Stop Tape 5	3:49:02 AM
	Play: 2:05:00		REW Tape 5	3:49:04 AM
000002	Tape 2	Fri	Play Tape 6	3:48:30 AM
	dist2	2/27/2004	Switch IRin 6	3:49:00 AM
	Cue: 0:00:30		Stop Tape 6	4:34:02 AM

The **V** button brings up an easy way to check that your IR commanding is assigned correctly. As shown (above left) you can select the various assigned VCRs and the functions that are used by the scheduler, including whether a given VCR is correctly selected by the Switcher. To go back to the Cassette display, select the **V** button again.

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