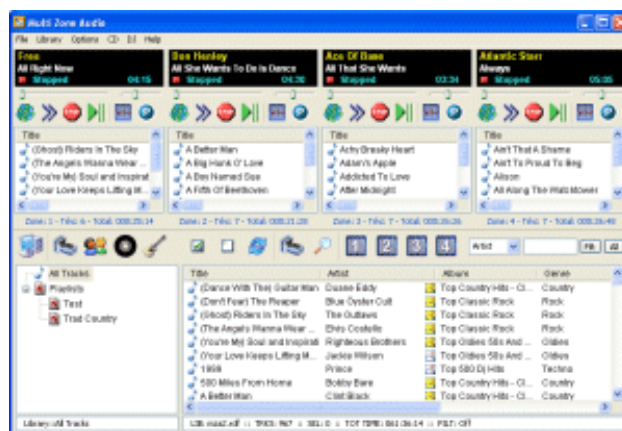


# MULTI ZONE AUDIO

Version 1.0  
by SoftJock, Inc.

## Table of Contents

- [Overview](#)
  - [Requirements](#)
  - [Getting Started](#)
  - [Adding your tracks to the Library](#)
  - [Navigation Tree](#)
  - [Main Track List](#)
  - [Loading songs into the Zone Players](#)
  - [Playing songs using the Zone Players](#)
  - [Using the Random Play Functions](#)
  - [Using the CD Player](#)
  - [Using the DJ Mixer](#)
  - [Using the Search Functions](#)
  - [General Program Options](#)
  - [Zone Player Options](#)
  - [Toggle Lists / Images](#)
  - [Summary](#)
- 
- [Using The Music Library \(separate doc\)](#)



## OVERVIEW

Multi Zone Audio, is a program designed to play multiple audio tracks, to different locations, at the same time.

Typical usage would be in a hotel, bar/restaurant, or even a smart home with a zoned sound system. It can play it's four main players (Zones) simultaneously through four separate sound devices (sound cards), with very low CPU usage, due to it's multi-threaded architecture. This insures that the sound to each zone is consistent and skip free.

It also includes a nice DJ Mixer, for use when you or one of your employees wants/needs to do some mixing. The mixer also has two additional players (Zones), that can also be mapped to different sound devices, thus allowing up to six (6) players running simultaneously! The mixer has both manual and AutoMix modes, and you can easily mix a playlist with a click or two. It has two different AutoMix modes, which can be easily adjusted on the fly, to get the best mixes.

The software also includes the latest version of the SoftJock Music Library, which has many features to make your life much easier. It has a built in tag editor, which can edit both MP3 and WAV tags; do batch edits; scan for BPM (Beats Per Minute); export your library lists; allows for unlimited libraries; scanning of bad file links; and a Wizard to quickly add all your music to a library, plus much more.

## REQUIREMENTS

Multi Zone Audio will run on a variety of Windows based PCs. Here are the minimum requirements:

OS: Windows XP Home or Pro, Windows Vista  
CPU: Intel or AMD processors 1 Ghz or above  
RAM: Minimum 256 MB, 512 MB or greater recommended  
HDD: <10 MB for the program  
VID: Any standard video card should work fine

For large systems utilizing all Zones simultaneously, obviously a quicker processor and more RAM will make the program more responsive.

## GETTING STARTED

---

The trial version of the software will run for approximately 30 minutes in demo mode before shutting itself down. You can restart the program after that as many times as you like to continue to evaluate it. All features are fully functional in the trial version.

The main menu at the top below the title bar, has various options for controlling the program, but there are many more features available in the pop-up menus throughout the program. Right clicking your mouse in different places will bring up different menu options, for example, if you right click over a Zone players header (where the artist/title are displayed), you will get different options than if you clicked on the Zones playlist queue, so take the time to look around.

Although Multi Zone Audio allows you to pick and choose your music from the Explorer style My Computer interface (or drag and drop right from Windows itself), if you want to use the advanced sorting, searching and random play features, you will want to add your music to a library. This is simple enough using our SoftJock Music Library.

## ADDING YOUR TRACKS TO THE LIBRARY

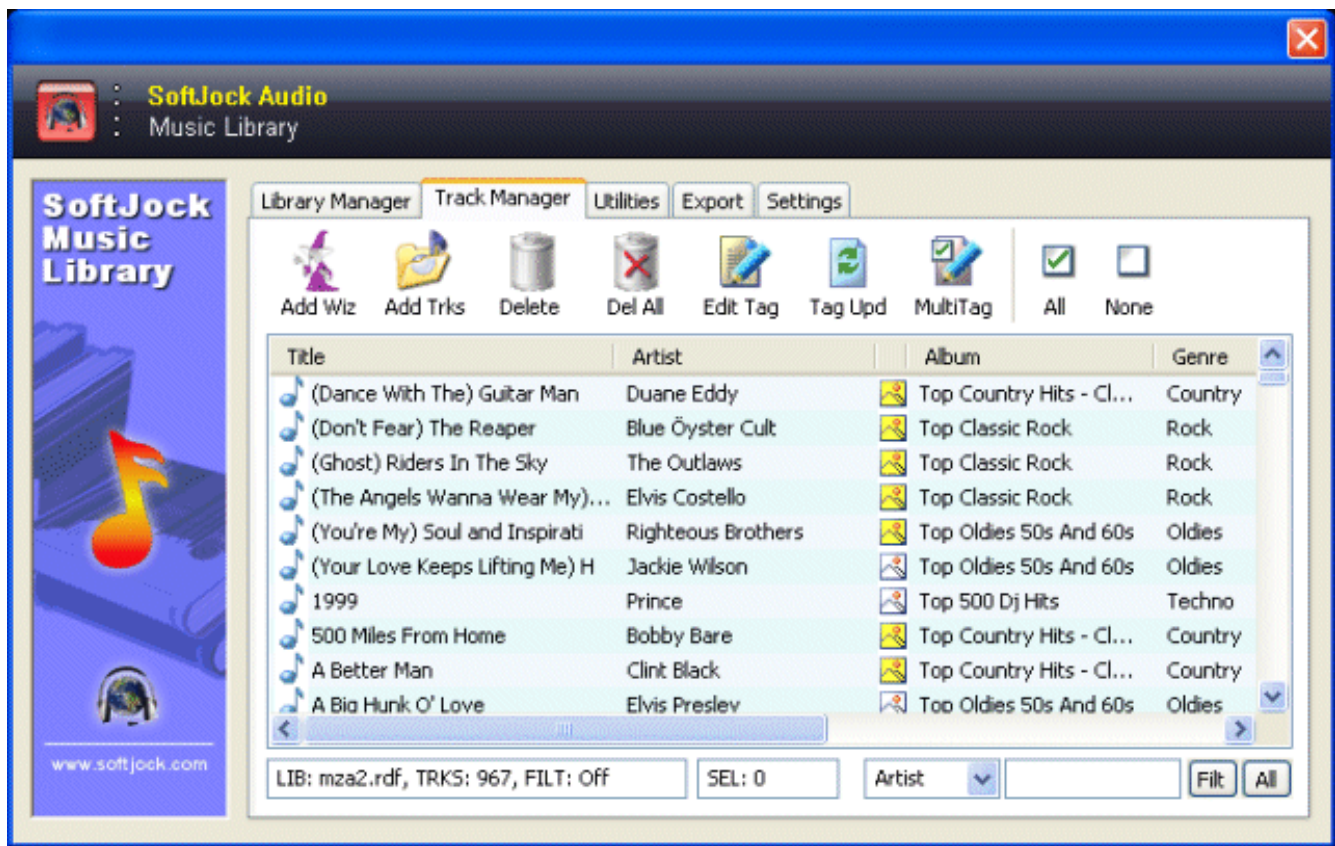
---

Adding tracks is quick and painless using our Add Wizard:

Go into the Music Library using either the menu option on top Library/Library Manager, or click the toolbar icon above the main track list (this looks like some books). The Library Manager has various tabs for doing different chores, and the first displayed will be the Library Manager itself, which lets you use unlimited multiple libraries.

On first startup of the program, we automatically created a default library for you to use, which is entitled multizoneaudio.rdf. For now, let's just leave that as the default, and go ahead and add your music to that library.

Click the tab for Track Manager, and you will see all the options available.



The first toolbar button is the Add Wiz, and is the easiest way to get started. Click Add Wiz, and the Wizard will open. Click the Next button to get started, and the Wiz will display a list of your computers hard drives and network drives if you are on a network.



Most people will choose their Local Disk C:, which is where most store their music files. You can also use the plus sign to choose a folder instead if you know where your music files are stored. If you choose to search the whole drive, this can take a few minutes, as the Wiz will search every folder on that particular drive chosen. If you choose a folder, for example My Music, the search will go much faster and you won't see any of the Windows sound clips, etc.

If your music is stored on an external drive, such as a USB or Firewire drive (or network drive), then choose that drive.

Click Next to begin the search. Remember, if you've chosen a root drive, this can take some time depending on how many files are on your computer. On the computer I'm writing this on (AMD Athlon 3000, 2 GB of RAM, 80 GB hard drive with about 150,000 files), the search on the root C: drive took about 1 minute and 10 seconds - your mileage may vary.

**Note:** When adding tracks to your music library, or doing maintenance work on your library, you should not be playing music. You can, but because this is a very intensive process, the music may skip or stutter. Better to do these functions before starting playing.

When the search is complete, it will display Search Complete, and the number of music files the Wiz found.



Click the Next button.

Now you will have the Add screen showing, and can simply click the Add button, and the Wiz will go about it's business reading all your music and tag data, and build the library. This again, can be time consuming, so have patience.

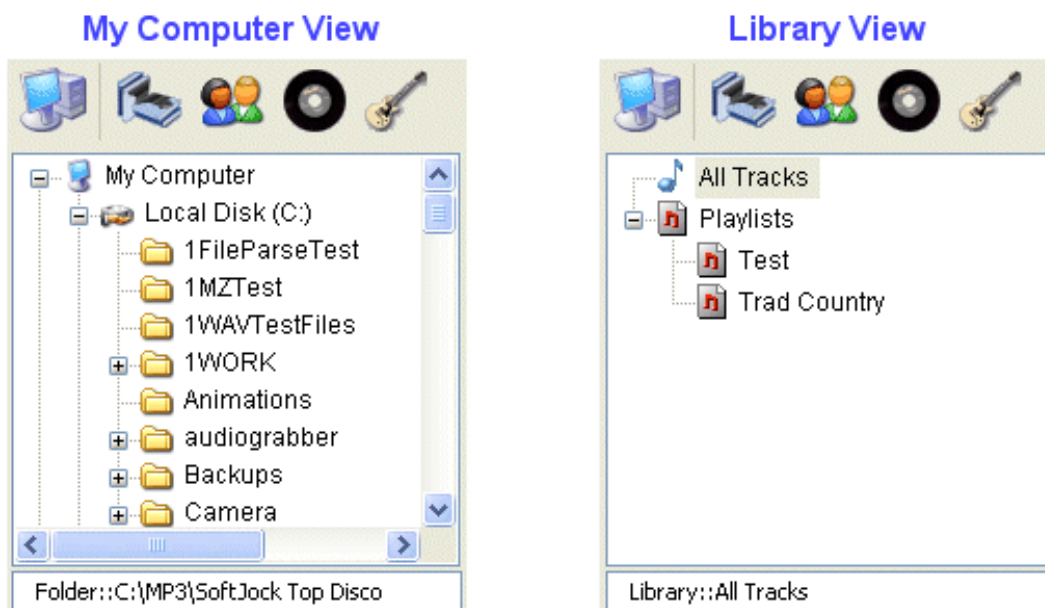


When completed, the Wiz will give you an opportunity to view any Exceptions to the add (files that could not be read, corrupt, etc.).

Click Finish, and you will be returned to the Track Manager screen, and it will be refreshed with all the files you added.

Your library is now ready for it's first use! You can now close the Library Manager out and return to Multi Zone Audio to try out some of the features.

## NAVIGATION TREE



The navigation tree in the lower left, allows you to easily browse and find your songs. There are five control buttons on the toolbar above the tree; My Computer, Library View, Artist View, Album View and Genre View.

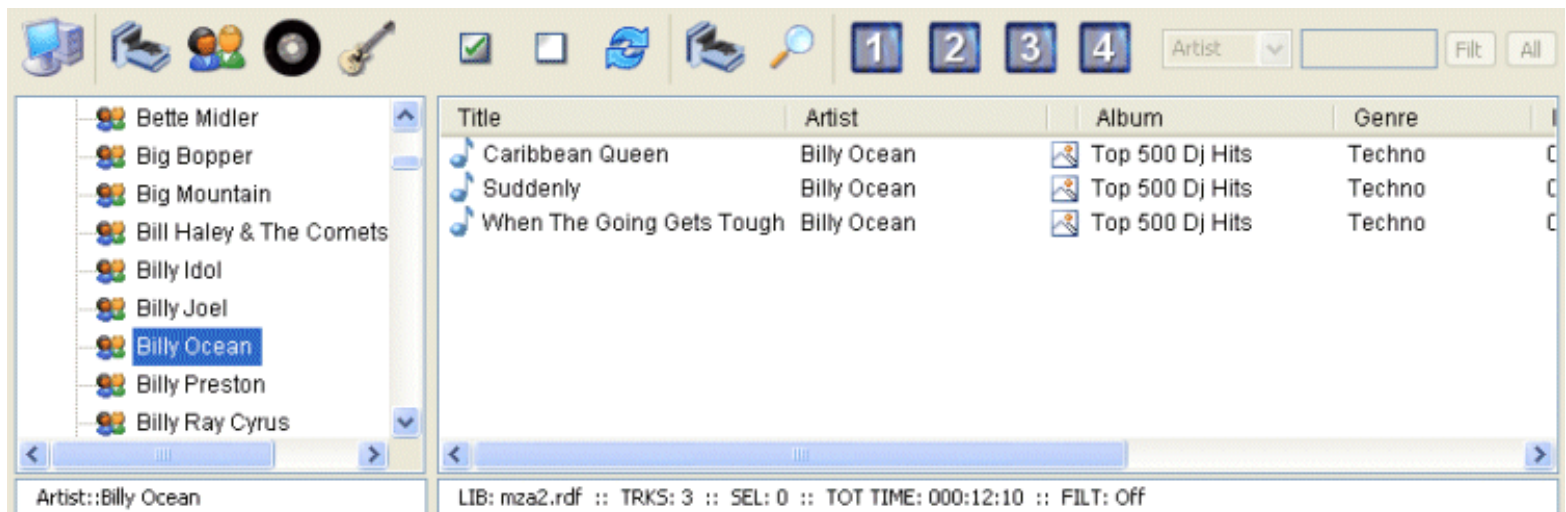
**My Computer View:** This shows you your computers drives and network drives (if you are attached to a network). Use the small + icons to open a particular drive or folder, then highlight the folder, and the songs will be displayed to the right in the Track List. If there are a large number of

songs in a folder, you will see a Reading Files indicator in the Track List status bar until all tracks have been analyzed.

Files are analyzed using a quick algorithm that will display enough information to quickly see what songs are in the folder, but again, this could take a few seconds depending on the number of files in the folder.

**Library View:** This will show you **All Tracks** in your current library, along with whatever playlists you may have created. This is a much faster view, as the songs have already been analyzed and loaded into your library. Selecting **All Tracks** will show the entire library; selecting a playlist will display only the files in that particular playlist.

**Artist, Album and Genre Views:** Clicking one of these, will rebuild the tree using a high-speed algorithm, and display the respective list in the tree. Selecting an item will display whatever songs are associated with that View. Example: Here we selected Billy Ocean in the Nav Tree, and you can see the tracks associated with that particular artist in the Track List.



There are different pop-up menus available on the Navigation Tree depending on what is showing, for example, here is the menu you will see if you right click over a Playlist:

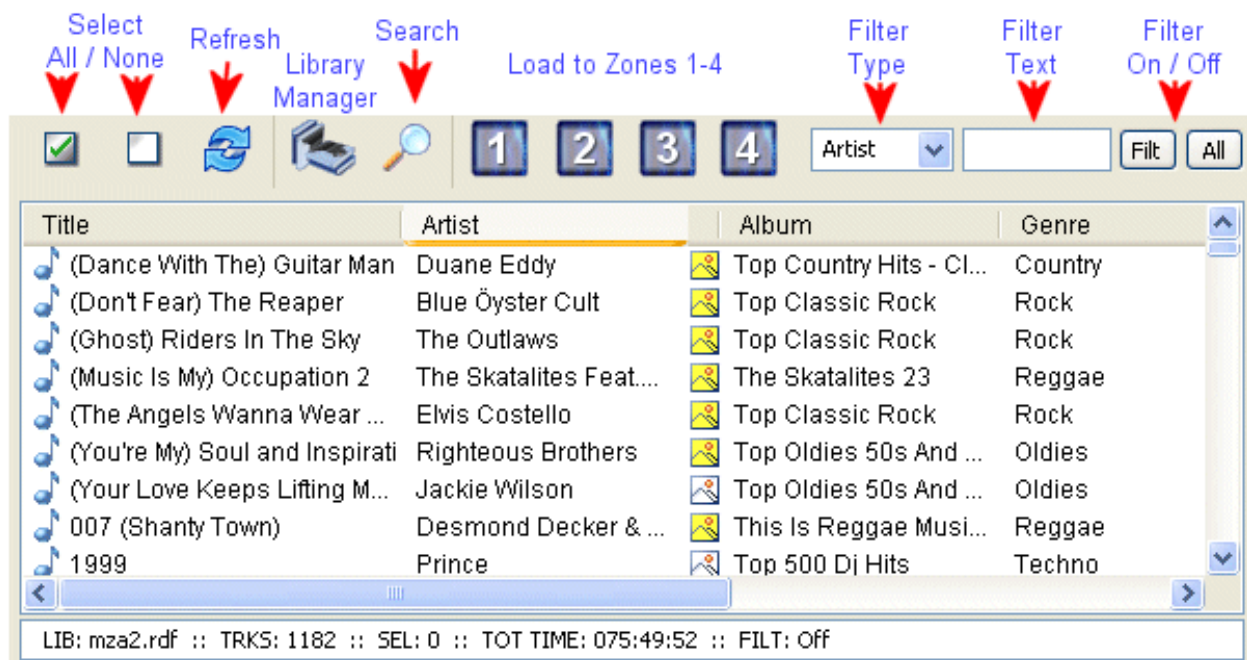


The choices for this particular menu are:

- New Playlist:** Allows you to create a new playlist.
- Edit Playlist:** Opens the Playlist Editor for arranging, adding, deleting, etc.
- Del Playlist:** Allows you to delete the selected playlist.
- Empty Playlist:** Retains the playlist, but removes the songs from it.
- Load to 1-4:** Will load the entire playlist to the Zone of your choice.
- AutoDJ Playlist:** Will load the entire playlist to the DJ Mixer, and start the mix.

## MAIN TRACK LIST

---



The Main Track List is where all tracks are displayed depending on what is selected in the Navigation Tree.

The toolbar options are as follows:

Select All: Selects all tracks in the list for an operation.

Select None: The opposite of above.

Refresh: Will refresh the current list.

Library Manager: Will bring up the full SoftJock Music Library Manager as we did above adding music.

Search: Will bring up the Search box.

Load to 1-4: Loads selected tracks to the respective Zone Player.

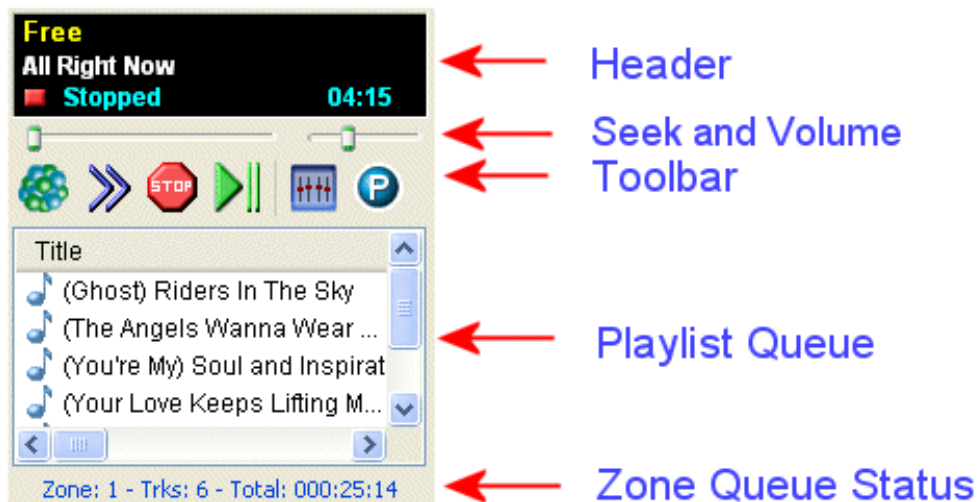
Filter Type: Select how you would like to filter the tracks.

Filter Text: Type in some text, for example, choose Artist for Type, then Bruce Springsteen or an abbrev.

Filter On / Off: Click Filt, and the list will be filtered based on your criteria, Off goes back to All Tracks.

To sort the tracks in a particular order, just click the column header, example Artist, and the tracks will be sorted, click again, and the sort order will be reversed.

## USING THE ZONE PLAYERS



## LOADING SONGS INTO THE ZONE PLAYERS

---

There are a few ways to load songs into a Zone player, we'll start with the easiest.

Drag and Drop from the main track list at bottom. If you drop the song onto the player header (top portion), the song will load and start playing immediately (this is an option in each Zones Properties to auto play on load).

If you drop into the player queue, the song will be added to the queue. The songs are added to the end of the queue, and you can move them around using the lists right-click menu if you like.

The Eject menu item. This is available when you right click the player header, and will bring up a standard Windows File Open dialog if you like that format.

Drag and Drop from Windows Explorer, or any program that supports Windows standard drag and drop.

You can also drag songs from one Zones queue to another, or directly into a Zone player to play. When you drag a song from one queue somewhere else, it is removed from the Zone queue where it was.

## PLAYING SONGS USING THE ZONE PLAYERS

---



The easiest way is to click the Play button on the Zone toolbar :)

If you've loaded a song directly into the player header, it will start automatically if that option is on in the Properties.

You can use the Play/Pause button to play or pause the song currently playing, as it works like a toggle switch. Stop will stop the current play and reset the song to the beginning.

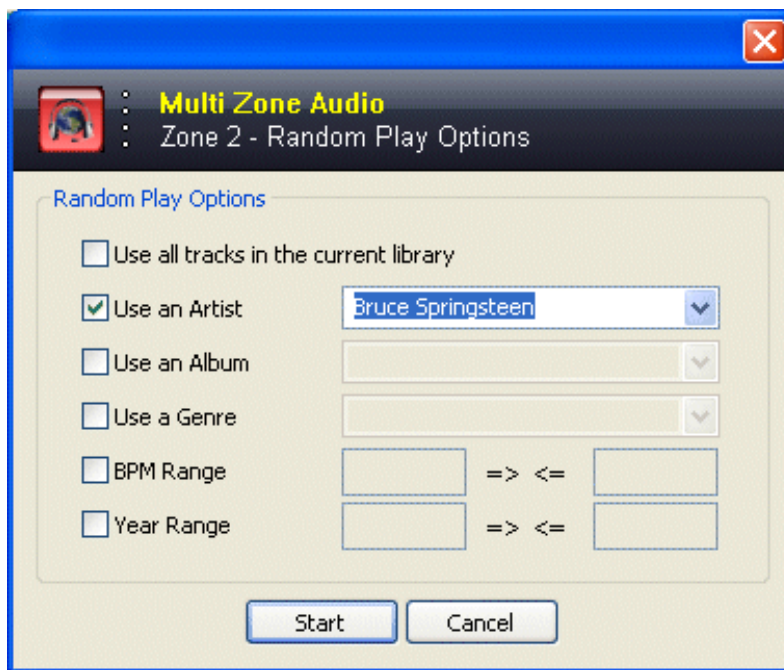
On the player header right-click popup menu, there are two additional options for Restart and Fade Out & Stop.

If you click the Next toolbar button while a song is playing, and there are songs in the queue (or Random Play is on), the next song from the queue (or random), will be loaded and buffered right into the song playing, replacing it.

## USING THE RANDOM PLAY FUNCTIONS

---

Random play is a great thing for this type of environment, as it can continuously play songs in a random order without you having to baby sit the Zones. We actually refer to this as pseudo-random, as there is no true random in the computer world, but it works very well if there are a large number of songs for it to choose from. When random play is on and one song finishes, the computer will choose another from whatever option you have given it to choose from.



## Starting Random Play:

When you click the Random Play button (the funny looking one with the sort of balloons), you will get the Random Play Options screen. The options are Use the entire library (the default, so you can quickly just press OK), or the other options of Artist, Album, Genre, BPM range and Year range.

If you wanted to random play say all songs by Bruce Springsteen (a good choice :)), just click the check mark next to Use an Artist, then a drop down list will appear for you to choose an artist in your music library. Same holds true with Album and Genre, and genre is one of the more popular, as you can choose Country for example, and only your songs tagged as country will play throughout that random session.

BPM and Year ranges have to be manually input, but it's easy enough. Click the check box next to Year range for example, type in 1970 in the first field, then 1990 in the second, and it will choose songs between (and inclusive) of the years you input. BPM range works the same, only using rounded off BPM like 120 to 130.

After choosing your random of choice, just click Ok, and it will load the first song and start playing.

**Note:** *If a song is presently playing in the Zone, it will wait for that one to finish before choosing the next song.*

## Stopping Random Play

If you click the Random Play toolbar button while Random Play is on, it will turn it off, but NOT stop the song currently playing. This is great when you've had some random stuff going, but now want to play from songs loaded into the queue or manually.

If you click the Stop toolbar button while Random Play is on, it will stop the current song playing, and stop the random play engine and return to manual mode.

## USING THE CD PLAYER

---



The CD player can play standard audio CDs on your computer. You can do a CDDDB lookup for the CD inserted into the drive by pressing the CDDDB Lookup button, which will connect to FreeDB, an on-line internet database, that contains information for most store bought audio CDs.

**Note:** You must have an internet connection in order to use this feature.

The other controls are standard CD type controls. The CD player plays to the computer's default sound card.

## USING THE DJ MIXER

The DJ Mixer is a simple dual deck interface, with standard controls, a queue (play list / wait list), and simple buttons to fade left / right, mix left / right, a cross fader, etc. It can also be used in compact or expanded mode, depending on whether you need to view the queue.



The controls on each of the DJ decks, are the same as on the regular zone players, so we will not duplicate that information here, and instead, get to the important stuff.

First, the queue (or play list / wait list, whatever you choose to call it). This simply holds tracks that are waiting to be auto-mixed, or just a play list you imported. It has the same functionality as the regular Zone lists, in that you can move items up or down, bring to top/bottom, shuffle the list, or clear the list. You can also drag tracks from this queue to either deck, or into one of the regular Zones, and drag tracks from any other Zone or the main list into it.

The status line at the bottom, simply tells you how many tracks are in the queue, and the total amount of time for all of the tracks.

## Auto/Manual Mixing and Controls



The DJ Mixer can be used in either AutoMix mode or Manual Mode. In AutoMix Mode, it will automatically mix the songs from deck to deck from the mixer queue list, until no further tracks are in the list, then it will switch back to manual mode.

The Auto/Manual button serves as a toggle between modes, and will switch modes accordingly.

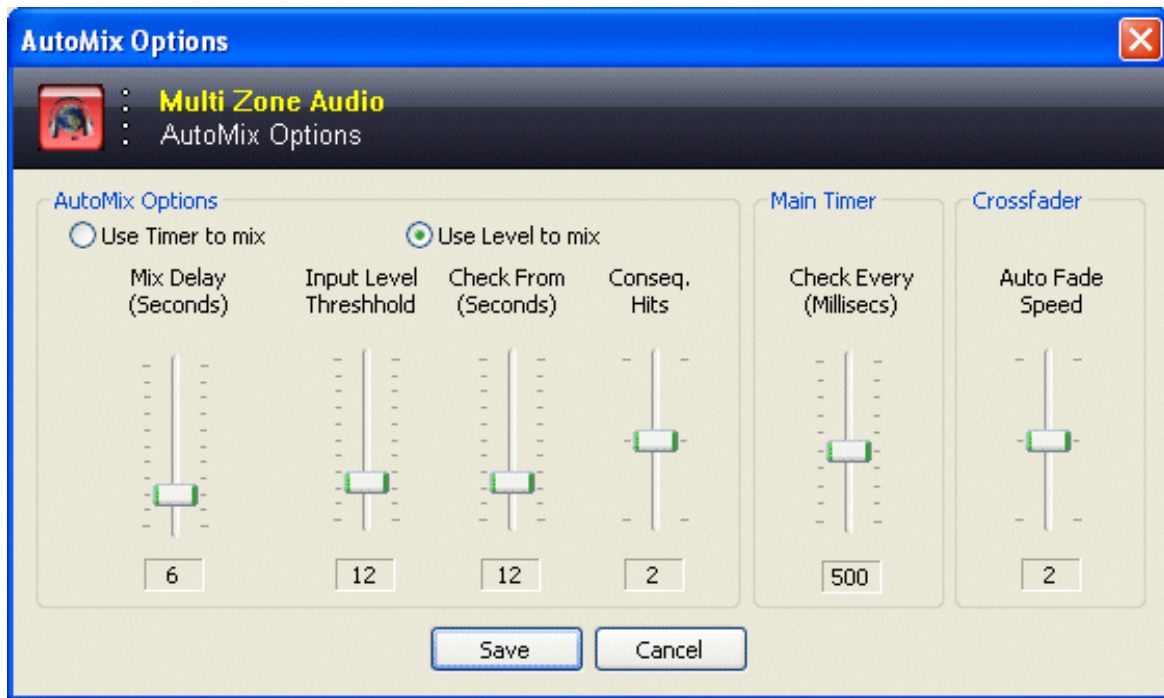
The << Mix and Mix >> buttons are used in manual mode, and will auto mix in the respective direction.

The << Fade and Fade >> buttons are used to move the crossfader automatically.

The crossfader can be dragged manually as well.

The status line (in black), will display what mode you are in, and the type of mixing in progress.

## AutoMix Options



The DJ Mixer can AutoMix in two different ways:

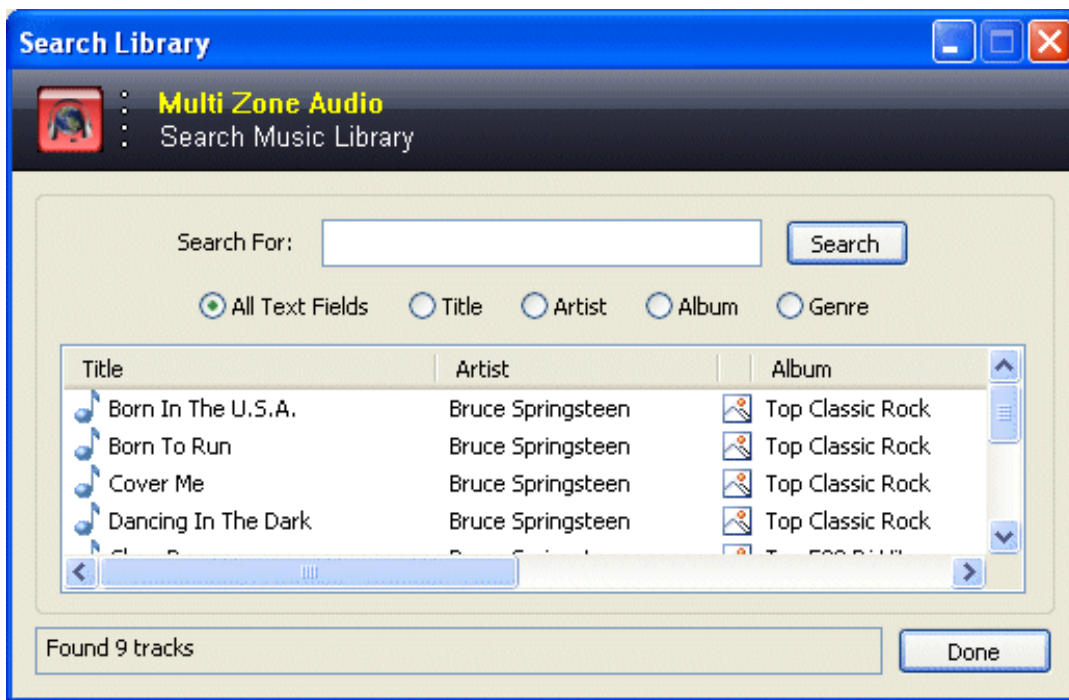
**Timer Mix:** This is a simple mix based on the number of seconds remaining in the song currently playing. The default Mix Delay is set at 6 seconds, and for example, if the mixer is playing a song in Deck A, when the remaining time hits 6 seconds, the mixer will load the next track into Deck B, start it playing, then start the AutoFade to Deck B using the AutoFade Speed. This type of mix works very well for songs that end abruptly.

**Level Mix:** This is a bit more complicated mix, in that the mixer will start checking for the songs Input Level Threshold, when Check From Seconds are remaining in the song. Conseq(utive) Hits are how many times the Input Level goes below that Threshold before the mix starts. This type of mix works very well for tracks that fade out, but not too well for tracks that end abruptly.

You can experiment with the settings to achieve the type of AutoMix you would like. We recommend leaving the Main Timer set at it's default for the best response.

## USING THE SEARCH FUNCTION

---

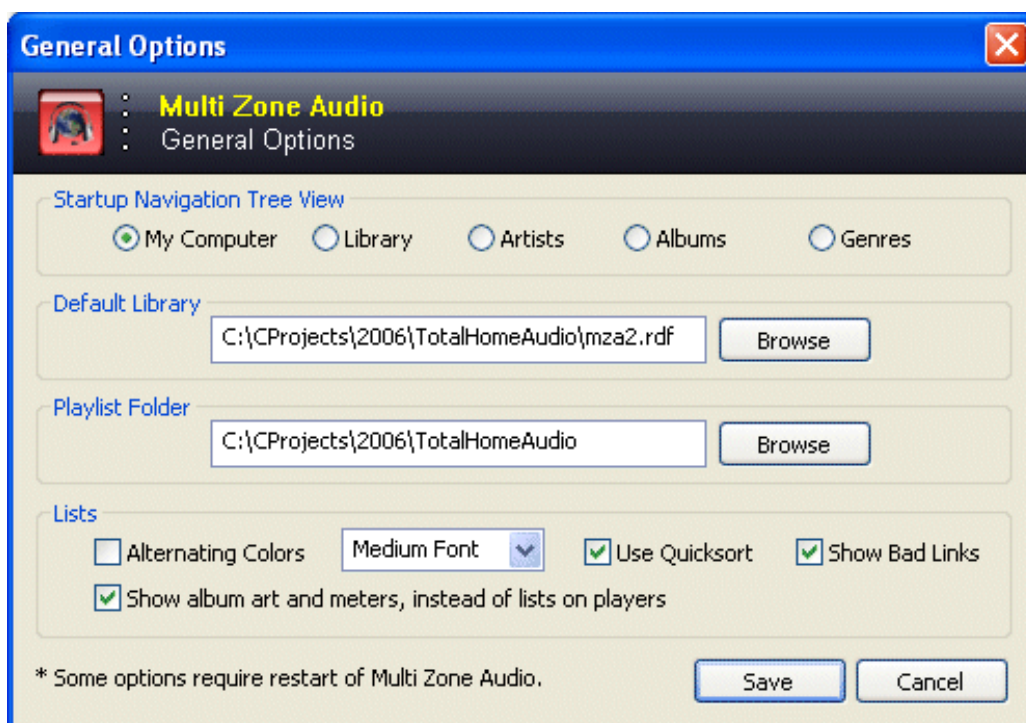


The search box will easily and quickly locate songs in your music library. Either use the toolbar button above the Track List (magnifying glass), or the Library / Search menu option on the main menu.

Type in the text you would like to find (or a portion thereof), choose the fields you want searched, and click the Search button. The results will display quickly, and you can simply drag and drop your selected song to any player, queue, playlist, etc.

The search functions work on the music library only, and do not search your hard drives due to the amount of overhead and time required to search drives.

## GENERAL PROGRAM OPTIONS



The General Program Options allows you to customize Multi Zone Audio to your needs.

**Startup Navigation Tree View:** Set this to whatever you want the navigation tree to display when you start the program. The default is My Computer.

**Default Library:** This is the current library you are using.

**Playlist Folder:** This is where Multi Zone Audio will look for it's playlists when it is displaying them.

**Lists/Alternating Colors:** This will show the main track list and player queues in alternating fashion, making it easier to discern each row.

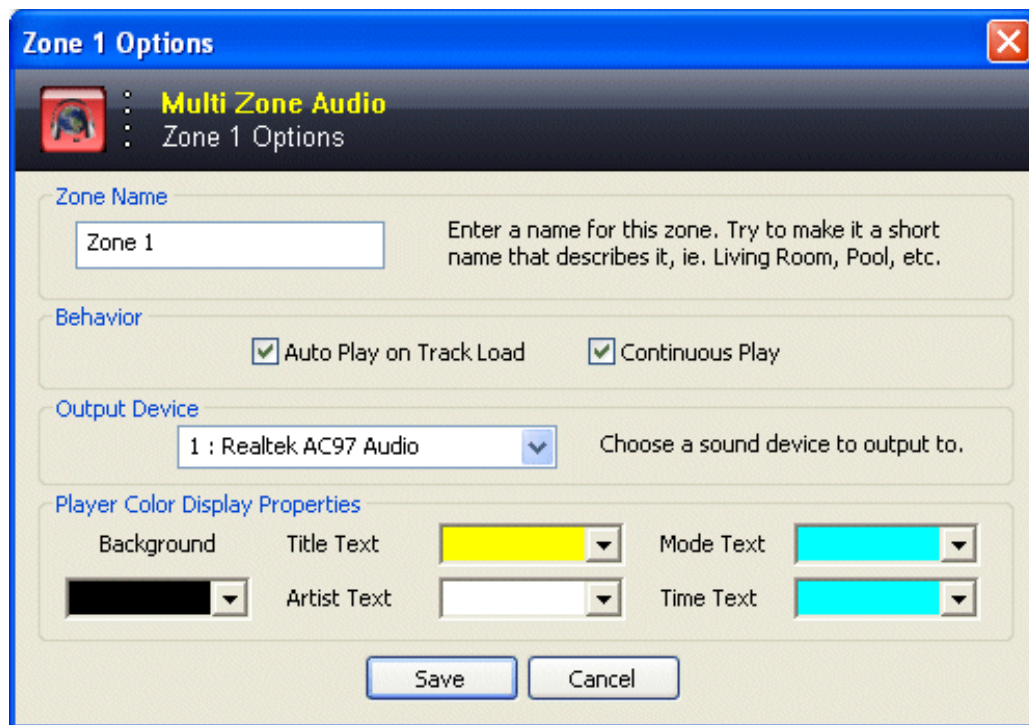
**Font Size:** You can choose from Small, Medium and Large fonts to be displayed in the lists.

**Use Quicksort:** This is a faster algorithm we use in place of the Windows standard list box sort. You can try it both ways to determine which works better for you.

**Show Bad Links:** This will show a yellow exclamation point in place of the music note on songs that no longer have a valid filename link. The library keeps track of the songs by using the full path and filename to that song, if you move that song to a different folder through Windows or another program, our library can no longer load or play it. Also, if you delete a song from a folder, the same holds true. If you run into these, go into the Library Manager / Track Manager, delete the song, and re-add it to your library from it's new location.

**Show Album Art & Meters:** This will show the album art screen and level meters in place of each Zones queues on startup. You can use the Options / Toggle Lists & Images menu item to switch back and forth.

## ZONE PLAYER OPTIONS



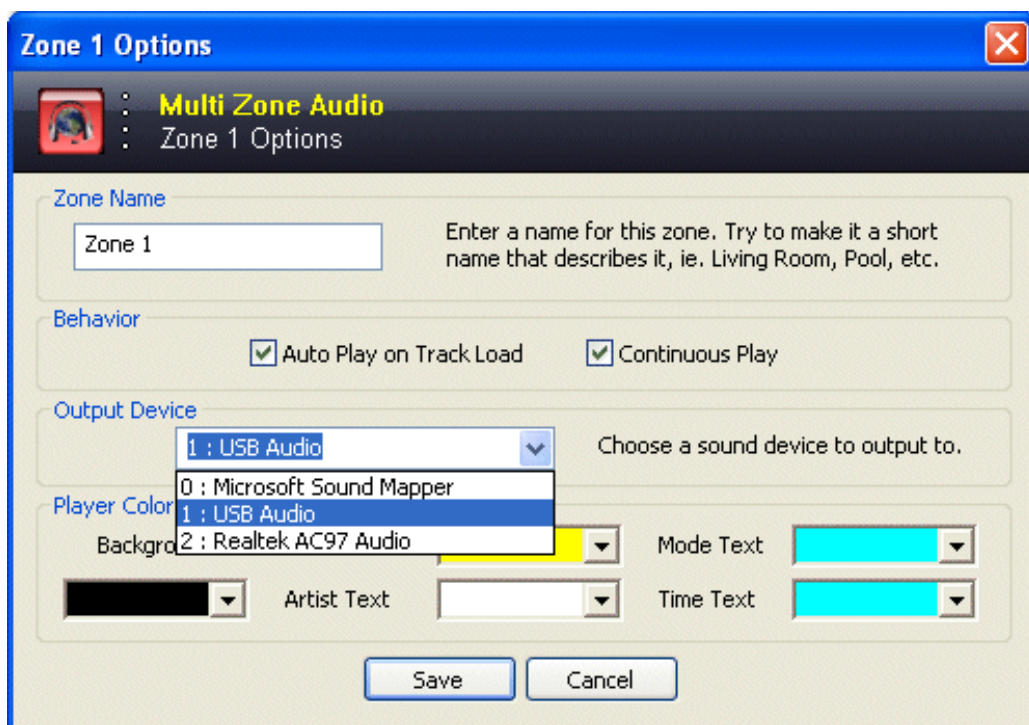
The Zone Players can be customized individually.

**Zone Name:** You can give each Zone a name to easily reference it's output. For example, you have Zone 1 outputted to a sound system in your living room, use Living Room for the name.

**Behavior - Auto Play:** If checked, whenever you load a song into the player header via drag and drop, Next, etc., the song will automatically start playing, if off, you will have to manually click the Play button or menu item.

**Behavior - Continuous Play:** If checked, the Zone Player will continue to play as long as there are songs in it's queue, if off, the player will stop after each song, regardless of whether more songs are in the queue.

**Output Device:** This is the internal or external sound card that will be used to map this Zone Player to. Clicking the arrow will display the sound cards on your system, and choosing one will automatically route the sound to the new choice immediately (even while playing a song). Choice 0 is always either Microsoft Sound Mapper or Primary Sound Card, and is an alias for whatever is the default sound card in Windows. For example, if you have a computer with only one sound card, you will see two choices, and they are both in reality the same card, so choosing either one will go to the same sound card. If you have more than one, as in the image below, you can choose which ever you want, even if it is not the default sound card. In this case, we have an external USB Audio sound card attached, as well as the internal sound that came built into the computer.



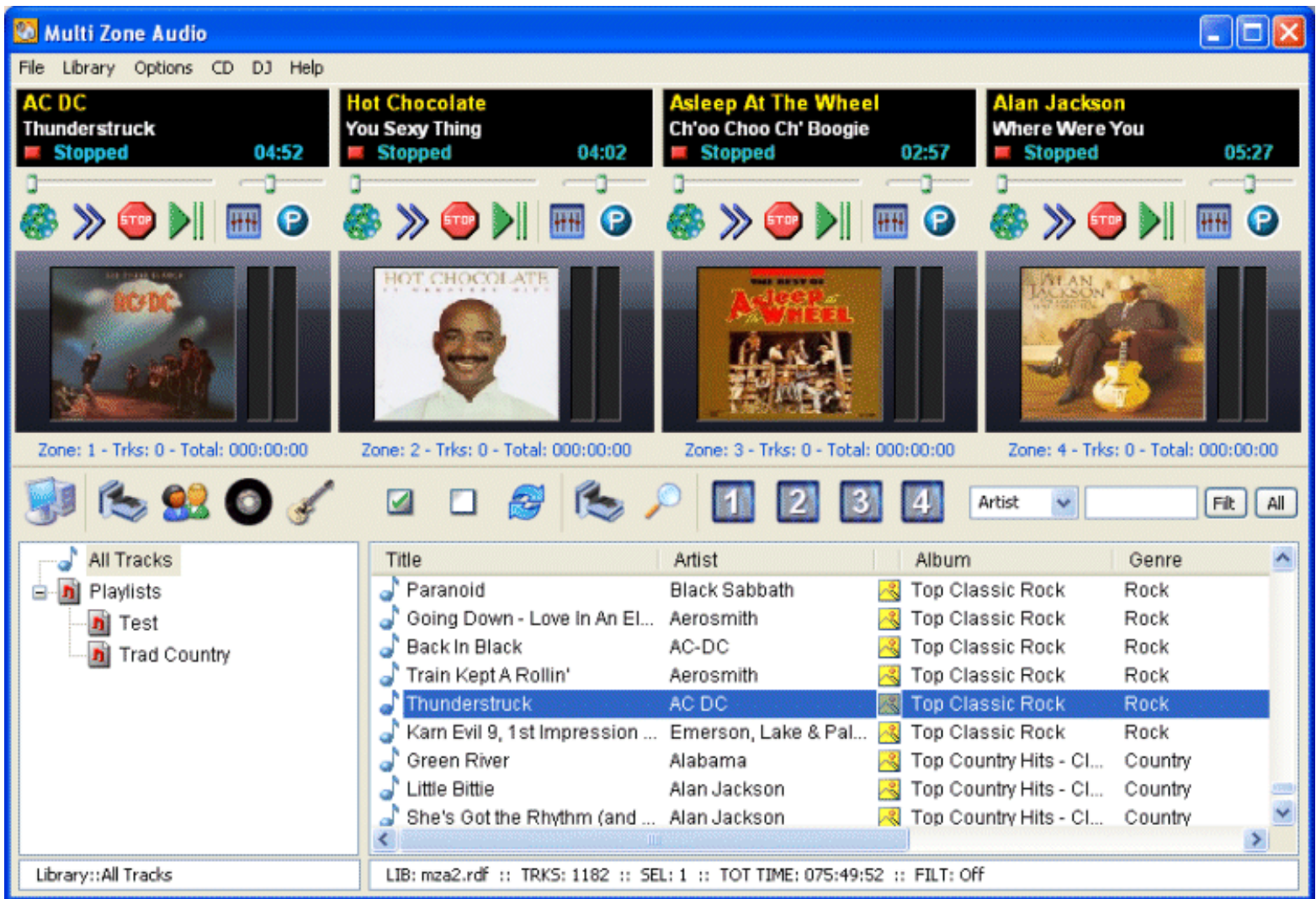
**Player Colors:** These are fairly self-explanatory, and can be used to customize the player header colors.

## TOGGLE LISTS / IMAGES

---

Multi Zone Audio can display each songs album art when playing the song, providing the song has an album art file in it's MP3 tag (these are not available with WAV songs). You can toggle each Zone individually or all four (4) at the same time from the Options / Toggle Lists & Images menu option, or right-click the Zone header and choose from the pop-up menu.

Here's what it looks like with art showing:



You can see from the main track list, that the little picture box for each song is yellow in this case, which indicates the song has art embedded into its MP3 tag. If your MP3 files do not have art, you can add that in the Tag Editor by using either a file you have on your computer, or by looking up the artist on Amazon.Com (there is a button for that in the Tag Editor, that will display the first 10 matches it finds - you must have a live internet connection to do the lookups).

The Tag Editor is covered in the Help Manual for the [SoftJock Music Library](#).

## SUMMARY

Multi Zone Audio will give you or your establishment hours upon hours of trouble free music, and give you the ability to project that music through multiple sound cards and systems, to many areas at once.

We hope you enjoy the program, and take the time to learn to use it to its maximum.

If you have any questions or comments, you can contact us through our support pages at [SoftJock.Com](#).