InkWelle Audio StreamScanner

The InkWelle Audio StreamScanner gives you a convenient way to access your collection of audio streams and organize them in menu-accessible playlists that you can easily scan through to choose one to listen to.

YOU have control of your playlists without having to rely on an external web service. You can add custom playlist notecards, or you can easily add streams to existing playlists with chat commands. Periodically update the default playlists for free at the InkWelle store with just a click of a button.

For more information about products by InkWelle, please visit www.inkwelle.com. For more information about the StreamScanner, please IM Katie Welles. For technical support, please read the manual. If you need additional help, IM Davie Zinner or Becky Pippen.

If just want to get running quickly, please see the very brief Quick Start User Manual (it has the same instructions that are in section 1.4 of this manual). To access advanced features or learn more about the product, please read this manual.

Table of Contents

1.1 Features

- Comes with an easy-to-use HUD controller plus a Console for your SL home
- Play Internet music streams and MP3s on your parcel
- Organize your favorite streams in playlists
- Define multiple playlists, each with unlimited streams
- Comes with several pre-defined default playlists with free updates
- Optionally use .m3u or .pls playlist files

- Controls for Next, Previous, Auto-Scan (samples each stream for a few seconds), and Hold, with additional menu options
- Includes a Relayer for use on rented or group-owned land

1.2 Requirements and Limitations

All SL streaming music players will only work on land that you own OR on land owned by a group that you are a member of, unless you use a relay object. If you do not own land, you can give the included Relayer to someone who owns land and ask them to deed it to their land. Read more about this later in this document in the Setup Instructions

In your SL Preferences, you must enable streaming audio. This is on the Audio and Video tab. Check the checkbox for streaming audio to enable it. This will cause a small audio controller to appear in the lower-right edge of your screen. Click the little triangle "play" button to enable audio. Click on the square "stop" button to turn it off.

You may have your Console rezzed and use your HUD at the same time. Whichever one you use last will take precedence. If you have multiple Consoles rezzed, they must be a minimum of 20 meters away from each other.

1.3 Definitions

Following are the definitions of some terms used in this manual and when discussing use of audio and other media streams in SL.

- Playlist: In general terms, a playlist is simply a list of music files or streams. The StreamScanner stores playlists on notecards – one notecard per playlist. While RL music players like iTunes or Windows Media Player will play music that is on the Internet or on your local computer, music players in SL will only play music that is on the Internet. For this reason, all the streams and files in a playlist for any player in SL are listed as complete URLs beginning with http:// -- which tells it where to get the music from the Internet. Each item in the playlist points to a stream or file that is hosted on the Internet, not on your home computer (unless you have set it up as a music-sharing server accessible from the Internet).

- .m3u or .pls: These are playlist formats used in RL music players such as iTunes.

- MP3: This is a common music file format. Note that your StreamScanner is only able to access MP3 files or audio streams that are accessible on the Internet, not MP3 files that live on your local hard drive (unless you have set your computer up as a music-sharing server accessible from the Internet).

- Stream: A continuous output from the Internet, designated by a URL. There are audio streams and video streams, but the InkWelle Audio StreamScanner pnly plays audio streams.

- HUD: This is an acronym for "heads-up display" and is a common type of interface in SL. To use a HUD, you "wear" it and it will appear on your screen until you "detach" it.

- Parcel: A "region" is a 256 x 256 meters – and each region can be broken into one or more parcels. A Parcel is the name of the individual piece of land that people can buy, sell, or rent in SL. Each parcel may have one audio stream assigned to it at any one moment. Everyone in the parcel hears the same stream. Streaming audio and video in SL is limited to play within the boundaries of a parcel.

1.4 Setup Instructions

Setting up the StreamScanner is a one- or two-step process, as described in the steps below:

- Set up the StreamScanner.
  To use the HUD StreamScanner, just wear it. The controls should appear near the top of your screen by default, but you can edit it, resize it, and move it anywhere on your screen. To use the non-HUD StreamScanner Console, simply rez it and place it where you would like to use it. If you live on group-owned or rented land, you must also use the Relayer (see below). Do NOT Deed the StreamScanner HUD or Console! (If you accidentally deed the HUD or Console, please see "Recovering from accidental Deed" in the Notes at the end of this document.

- Optionally set up the Relayer.
  If you plan to use the StreamScanner on group-owned land, or if you are not an owner of the land you live on, then you must use the Relayer. Please rez a copy of the Relayer object on your parcel, share it with your group, then deed it to the group. If you do not own land but have friends who do, or if you are a renter, you can give a Relayer to your friends or your landlord and ask that they deed the object.

  Either drag a copy of the Relayer from the contents of the StreamScanner, or click the Menu button the StreamScanner and select "Rez Relay". The StreamScanner will send the music settings to the Relayer, which can then change the parcel music stream.

  IMPORTANT: The Relayer only works within 100 meters of the StreamScanner, so you should choose a central location to rez it. The Relayer looks like a little microwave tower. The script inside it is mod/copy/transfer – so you can easily move the script into any other object that will look nice in your home or on your land. If your land is larger than 100 meters, you can rez multiple copies of the Relayer.

Note that you do NOT have to edit notecards to use this product if you don't want to! You can return to the InkWelle Store to receive free updates to your default playlists (because streams come and go on the Internet).

2.1 Controlling the StreamScanner

The InkWelle StreamScanner is controlled by clicking on its buttons, using the menu, or by chat. Each of these methods are described below:

2.1.1 Using the StreamScanner Buttons

The buttons on the StreamScanner are, from left to right:

- Minimize/Maximize (HUD only): This is the circle with the logo on it. Click to show the control panel – click again to shrink it

- Menu: Call up the menu (see the "Using the StreamScanner Menu" section below for details)

- Previous: Go to the previous stream in the current playlist

- Hold: Stop scanning and listen to the current stream

- Next: Go to the next stream in the current playlist

- Scan: Scan through the streams in the playlist (you listen to each stream for several seconds before automatically moving on to the next one)

2.1.2 Using the StreamScanner Menu

Click on the Menu button on the StreamScanner to see a menu with these options:

- Playlists: This will bring up a list of your default and custom playlists. Select a playlist to start playing the stream that you were listening to the last time you accessed this playlist.

- Help: Gives you a copy of this notecard.

- Update: Triggers the free update of your default playlists. This feature uses an Updater Object that is available free at the InkWelle Store.
  ** NOTE: If you have added temporary streams to your default playlists, you may be instructed to back them up before running the update, because if the scripts are updated or reset during this function then temporary data will be lost. Please see "Backups and Updates" later in this document for information.

- LstStreams: Display in the chat area a list of all the stream URLs. This will allow you to list the streams in the current playlist ("This List"), in all playlists ("All Lists"), or just the temporary streams from all playlists ("Temps"). This also gives you access to the "ClearTemps" button where you can delete ALL temporary streams (which you may want to do if you have created a separate playlist notecard for your new streams)

- Add: Gives you the chat command to add a temporary stream to the current playlist

- Delete (--): This button is only available if the current stream is temporary. Click this button to delete the temporary stream from the playlist

- Scan Rate: Selects how long (in seconds) to sample each stream during scan mode before moving on to the next stream

- Hover Text: Select how much information to display in hover text above the StreamScanner. Select "Short" to display just the short name. Select "Long" to display the playlist name + the stream URL. Select "None" to display nothing at all.

- Rez Relay: Rezzes a copy of the Relayer from the StreamScanner's contents. This is only necessary on group land or if you are not a land owner (refer to the Setup Instructions" section in this manual for more information).

3.1 Using the StreamScanner

The buttons and menus on the StreamScanner are the same on the HUD and the Console. The only exception to this is that the HUD version looks a little different and includes a button on the left that you can use to minimize or maximize the display.

The first time you use the product, you will be shown a menu of available playlists as soon as you rez it or wear it. Select a playlist to begin the audio stream. Note that you will see a small audio controller at the bottom of your SL screen – you must click the play button (triangle) to enable the audio on the parcel. The music plays only while you are on the parcel. (Please be sure to read "Requirements" earlier in this document.)

Any subsequent time you use it, the device will remember what playlist and which stream you were listening to and will continue from there. If you were in scan-mode when you were last listening, you will need to press the Scan button to go back into scan-mode.

3.1.1 Playing Music

Your StreamScanner includes predefined playlists and streams. To see the playlists, click the Menu button and choose "Playlists" from the menu (they will be displayed in alphabetic order). Select a playlist by clicking on its button. The menu will disappear and the current stream in the list will begin to play. If you have listened to this playlist before, the current stream is the last stream you listened to. You can see a list of the streams in the current playlist by choosing "LstStreams" from the menu, then selecting "ThisList" on the submenu. The results will be displayed in the chat area.

To advance to the next stream in the playlist, press the Next button. To play the previous stream, press the Previous button. When you get to the end of a playlist's permanent and temporary streams, it will start again at the beginning.

You can automatically scan all your streams in the current playlist to see what is playing, then stop on one you like. Press the Scan button and it will play a few seconds of each stream. To stop the scanning and stay on the currently playing stream, press the Hold button. You set the number of seconds that the scan stops on each stream by choosing "Scan Rate" from the menu.

Note that streams are continuously playing streams of audio—much the way that radio is. For this reason you cannot fast-forward through the music or jump between songs within a stream.

3.1.2 Adding and Editing Playlists and Streams

Playlists.

Playlists are defined in notecards stored in the StreamScanner contents. There is a separate notecard for each playlist, and the first 8-12 characters of the name of the notecard is the name of the playlist. This gives you control over what the streams and playlists are called and allows you to build custom playlists that you can share with others who use this product. You can make new playlists by adding a new notecard to the StreamScanner's contents, or remove a playlist by deleting the notecard. You can have 20 to 100 playlists in your StreamScanner, depending on the length of their names.

Note that you do NOT have to edit notecards to use this product if you don't want to! You can return to the InkWelle Store to receive free updates to your default playlists (because streams come and go on the Internet). However note that if you add your own "temporary streams" to the StreamScanner, then you must eventually back them up in a notecard or else you may lose them when you update. (This is described in the "Backups and Updates" section later in this manual.)

Streams.

You can modify the streams permanently in your playlists by editing the playlist notecards, or temporarily by using the "Add" and "Delete" menu options.

Permanent Streams. The permanent way to add streams to a playlist is by editing the notecard. In the playlist notecard, the streams are listed one per line. On each line, specify the URL of the stream first, then optionally a short friendly name for the stream, separated by one or more spaces or tabs. For example:

    http://example.com:8080   reggae
    http://some.domain.org/stream/192832 New Age and Alternative

Blank lines and lines starting with a hash character (#) are ignored. So you can use the # at the beginning of a line that has a comment. For example:

    http://example.com:8080   reggae
    # this is the one that Fred told me about!
    http://some.domain.org/stream/192832 New Age and Alternative

You can also copy an entire .m3u or .pls playlist and paste it into a notecard in the StreamScanner's contents. The StreamScanner will know how to extract the URLs from those formats so you can paste them in without having to edit them. In addition to streams, you can also list MP3 and Ogg (Ogg Vorbis) files as long as they are accessible on the Internet and you can list them with a fully qualified URL (starting with http://).

Temporary Streams. You can *temporarily* add streams in a playlist (and delete temporary streams) using the menu and chat. The StreamScanner can hold between 25-50 temporary streams per playlist, depending on the combined length of the URLs and names. From the menu

choose "Add" and the system will tell you the chat command to use to add a stream to the current playlist. Note that the chat channel for the HUD is 24, and the chat channel for the Console is 42. The command is the "/chat# stream" followed by the stream URL, one or more spaces, and optional stream name; like this:

(command for the HUD)   /24 stream http://some.domain.org:8080/ name

(command for the Console)   /42 stream http://some.domain.org:8080/ name

Note that this is considered a TEMPORARY stream because it is not in a notecard, and it will only remain in your playlist until the system is reset. You will be warned at the time of an update if the update will reset the system and it will give you the opportunity to first back up your temporary streams. Please see "Backups and Updates" later in this document.

You can delete a temporary stream from your playlist by choosing "Delete" from the menu. The Delete button ONLY appears when a temporary stream is being played. Note that if you select "Delete" the system will delete the currently-played temporary stream WITHOUT ASKING if you are sure!

4.1 Backups and Updates

This section describes how to back up your temporary streams and how to update your system.

4.1.1 Backups

The ability to add and delete temporary streams via chat and menu is a feature that our customers requested so there would be an easy way to try out a new stream without having to add it to a notecard. When you use the menu and chat to add a stream, it is considered a "temporary" streams. The StreamScanner can hold about 25-50 temporary streams per playlist, depending on how long the URLs are and other memory-impacting issues.

Temporary streams only last until the StreamScanner is reset (which for most users happens only very rarely). If you find a stream that you like, you should back it up by adding it to a playlist notecard. Don't add them to the predefined playlist notecards, because those playlists will be overwritten at the next update.

**Note: Most of the time when you get the automatic updates from InkWelle Store the temporary streams are not affected. But in the case where the update includes an update to certain scripts, then you will be told to back up your temporary streams before continuing with the update. **

Follow these steps to create a backup:

- Click the "List Streams" menu, then click on "All Temps" on the submenu. This will chat a list to you of all your temporary streams along with the playlists that they were added to.

- Go into the Chat History, then copy the temporary streams from chat. There is no need to delete extra characters such as time-stamps… StreamScanner will know how to read it.

- Open an existing playlist notecard, or create a new notecard. Paste the copied list into the playlist, then save the notecard to make it permanent. If you create a new notecard in your avatar's inventory, remember to drag it into the contents of the StreamScanner. Don't add these streams to any of the predefined playlist notecards, because they will be overwritten at the next update.

- Whatever name you give to the notecard will be the name of the playlist. Note that SL dialog buttons are only large enough to show the first 10 – 12 characters of the playlist names in the playlist menu.

- Note that the default playlists that came with your StreamScanner are periodically replaced by the Update feature, so you should only add new streams to your own custom playlist notecards. The default playlists all begin with a tilde (~).

Note that your temporary streams will continue to be available in the various playlists that you originally added them to unless the StreamScanner is reset, which might occur during some updates. You can remove them either by clicking the "Delete" button as you hear them, or you can delete ALL the temporary streams at one time by clicking on the "LstStreams" button, then selecting "ClearTemps" from the submenu.

4.1.2 Updates

Because streams on the Internet come and go, InkWelle periodically updates its default playlist notecards. Sometimes the Update process will update only your playlist notecards, but sometimes it will also give you an update of the scripts that make up the StreamScanner.

To get these updates for free any time, get a free Updater Object from the InkWelle Store (from the "Update" poster in the "For The Home" area of the store). Rez the Updater Object and place it within 10 meters of your StreamScanner. If you are wearing the HUD, just stand within 10 meters of the Updater Object. Choose "Update" from your StreamScanner menu to begin the update process. If you are updating both your HUD and the Console, you will need to update each unit separately.

The update system will look at the version in your StreamScanner. If your system and playlists are up to date it will let you know and will not continue with the update process. If you do need an update, the system will let you know whether your temporary streams will be affected and then will ask you to confirm before continuing.