Working with Codecs and MP3s (DC SIX tutorial)

We often get requests for tips and tricks about DC Six and DC Live/Forensics.

Unfortunately, we don't have a large, secret stash of tricks that we like to keep to ourselves. When we find something interesting, we get it out to our users right away. However, this month we do have something that we suspect will be of help to 216 or so of you. Most of you will likely already know this trick, but for those who don't, it'll be worthwhile. It may even cause a giggle to erupt.

We get a lot of questions about exactly how to save your files as MP3s. Most folks would rather do it in DC Six and we do explain how to do it in the manual, but it still generates a lot of questions. However, just about everybody sooner or later finds a decoder and points DC Six to it. This works, but we're going to show you, using our "step by step" method, an easier way.

The key to this is called a **Codec**. This is computerspeak for COmpressor/DECompressor. Basically, it's a little bit of code that takes audio (or video) data at its input, does something to it, and spits out the processed data on its output. Even if you don't need the MP3 codec we'll describe in this article, you may learn a bit about how to install codecs in your computer.

So lets' get started with our Step-by-Step guide. Along the way, we'll check your system to see if you can already easily save MP3 files. Just do these steps in order:
1. Bring up DC Six and open up any file.
2. Click on File/Save Source As
3. In the Files of Type box, choose MPEG Layer 3 (if you don't have this or something similar, just go ahead)
4. Now drop down the box that says "select a format". You will see what formats are available in your MP3 codec. Windows XP comes with one but it'll only encode up to 22khz audio - if that's all you have, continue on. If you have up to 48khz audio listed, congratulations. You already have high-rez encoder installed. Feel free to use it!
5. You'll probably notice quite a number of codecs in the "select a format" box. All these are installed on your machine and you can likely use them with DC Six. If you don't know what they are, I wouldn't recommend it though.
6. Now let's get our new MP3 codec. Just click this link:

http://www.free-codecs.com/Lame_Encoder_download.htm

7. Download the first or 2nd item. We use the 3.97 and have had no problems.
8. Now unzip all the files into a folder.
9. Right click on the file called lameACM.inf - this may be easier to see if you click View/Details at the top of the window.
10. From the right click menu, select Install
11. It'll be done in 5 seconds and you'll now have installed a high rez MP3 codec!

Make sure you close DC Six and then reopen it.