

# Pinnacle Studio Plus 9



BY JAN OZER



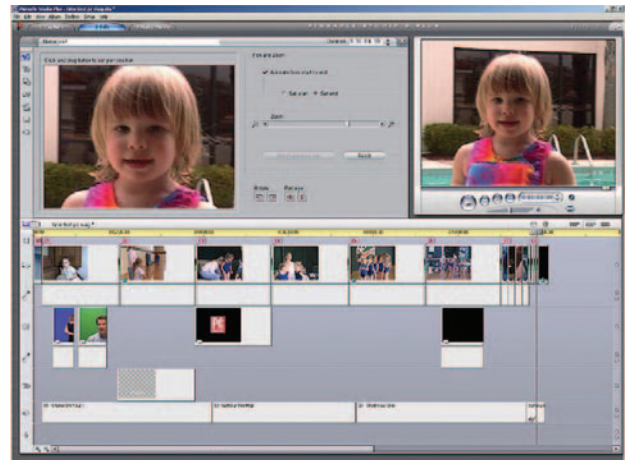
One of the pioneers in the category, Pinnacle Studio has long been an impressive consumer-level video editor—though of late we've bemoaned its lack of PiP capabilities and pan and zoom control for still images. Pinnacle Studio Plus 9 addresses such deficits, while also adding a second timeline and useful audio options. The result is a fantastic product that stands out in the competitive consumer video-editing market.



Studio Plus's new PiP controls are comprehensive. You can place a customizable border around the inset picture, defining its color, edge softness, shadow color, and transparency. Output quality of PiP effects is very good. And Studio Plus' chroma key controls are equally robust. Output quality, however, significantly trails that offered by Premiere Elements.

The new still-image pan and zoom tool, which includes both red-eye reduction and image-rotation features, is very easy to use. To create the pan and zoom motion, you set the start and end points within a window. A zoom slider lets you intuitively control magnification. The output was very good and didn't produce any of the flicker introduced by Premiere Elements.

Studio Plus adds Dolby Digital Stereo encoding, a plus for serious DVD producers. Audiophiles will appreciate Studio Plus's new surround-sound capabilities, which can precisely position each audio track within a 5.1 speaker configuration. Pinnacle also updated Studio Plus's real-time audio mixer so you can control the extra track of audio that comes with the second timeline.



Beyond the features for feature comparison, Studio Plus outperforms Premiere Elements in a number of critical areas. For example, we found Studio Plus's color correction more effective than that of Premiere Elements. And its DVD-authoring capabilities are far more flexible. All told, Pinnacle Studio Plus is an approachable video editor for novices, while offering the depth experienced video enthusiasts won't find in other packages at this price.

Pinnacle Systems Inc.

**Company:** Pinnacle Systems Inc., [www.pinnaclesys.com](http://www.pinnaclesys.com)

**Price:** \$99 direct

**Pros:** Easy to use. Broad feature set, particularly for audio and DVD authoring. Strong performance.

**Cons:** Lackluster chroma key quality.

**Bottom Line:** Pinnacle Studio Plus 9 delivers a top-notch blend of features, usability, and performance for most consumers.

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