



How to Capture a MySpace Page for Investigative Purposes

By **Lauren Wagner**
Computer Training Specialist
and
Keith Daniels
Computer Training Specialist

Many critical law enforcement investigations today require careful examination of information found on MySpace pages. One of the most effective ways to consistently capture a MySpace page for evidence files and/or presentation in court is to use a product called Camtasia to make a video of the navigation through the MySpace page in question, which can be saved and played back later.¹ You can also import the Camtasia video using Windows Movie Maker and create still shots of different pieces of the MySpace page in addition to the whole video. Additionally, you can use a separate application to individually capture the video and audio files on the MySpace page.

¹ Camtasia Studio is a product of TechSmith, a company that develops screen capture and screen recording software. Camtasia is a tool that enables users to record a screen or Web camera video to create training, demonstration or presentation videos (screencasts). The Techsmith Camtasia download site is <http://www.techsmith.com/camtasia.asp>.



Recording a MySpace Page Using Camtasia

Before you begin any recording for later use, it is important to have a pre-familiarization with the MySpace page in question. You should locate and preview all blogs, videos, pictures, audio files, etc. associated with the page.

The process for recording a MySpace page using Camtasia is as follows:

1. Open Camtasia and select a new recording. On the New Recording Wizard screen, select **Entire Screen** as your setting for the video capture and click **Next** (Figure 1).



Figure 1

- On the Recording Options screen (Figure 2), select **Record Audio** in order to ensure capture of the audio and video files on the MySpace page. Click **Next**.



Figure 2

- On the Choose Audio Settings screen (Figure 3), you have several options. The best option is to select to record **Speaker Audio**. That way, any background noise (i.e., clicking of the mouse on the computer or any typing or background talking) is eliminated. However, this will not work if you do not have speakers connected to your computer. Click **Next**.



Figure 3

- Make sure to take note of the way you stop the Camtasia recording, as noted in Figure 4. Click **Finish**.



Figure 4

- It is also important to note how you start the recording, as instructed and illustrated in Figure 5.



Figure 5

- Press **Save** in the bottom right side of the recording (Figure 6) and save the recording to the location of choice (Figure 7).



Figure 6



Figure 7

Once you are ready to begin the recording of the MySpace page, there are certain investigative aspects that need to be considered:

- While making the recording of the MySpace page, you should play all audio and video files in the page so that they can be recorded as-is from the MySpace page.
- You should record the process of getting from the profile page to all of the picture albums and pictures themselves.
- You should navigate to and record all blog entries.
- You should record the navigation from an audio file on the MySpace profile page to the artist's MySpace profile page. To achieve this, select the small "music notes" icon in the bottom right side of the audio player in the MySpace profile page (Figure 8). Simple connections to particular artists can provide additional evidentiary value (i.e., artists who propagate environments of hatred, violence, etc.).



Figure 8

- Also, because of the graphic complexity of MySpace texts, backgrounds and layouts, there may be some text that is not seen because of color conflicts. It is important to record the selection of all text on the profile page (CTRL + A works well to select all text) and to ensure there is no black-on-black or other color-hidden text in the profile page.

Saving a Camtasia Video to a .wmv File Format

When you get to the Post-Save options, it is important to make sure to save the file to a .wmv file to import into Windows Movie Maker.

The process for saving a Camtasia Video to a .wmv file is as follows:

1. On the Post-Save Options screen, select **Produce my video in a shareable format** (Figure 9). Click OK.



Figure 9

2. On the Production Wizard (Figure 10), select **Custom production settings** and click **Next**.



Figure 10

3. Select **Windows Media streaming video** as the format you wish to save to (Figure 11). Click **Next**.



Figure 11

4. Keep the defaults and click **Next** on the next four screens (Figures 12-15).



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15

5. Select the place where you wish to save your file and click **Finish** (Figure 16). The file will begin to render (Figure 17).



Figure 16

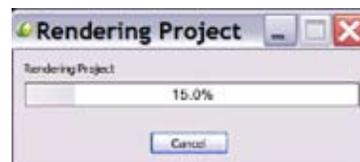


Figure 17

Using Windows Movie Maker to Capture Still Shots from the Camtasia Video of the MySpace Page

Now that you've captured the subject MySpace page and saved it as a .wmv extension, you can import it into Windows Movie Maker.

The process for importing a .wmv file into Windows Movie Maker is as follows:

1. Download Windows Movie Maker free from <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/downloads/updates/moviemaker2.msp>. Open Windows Movie Maker (Figure 18).

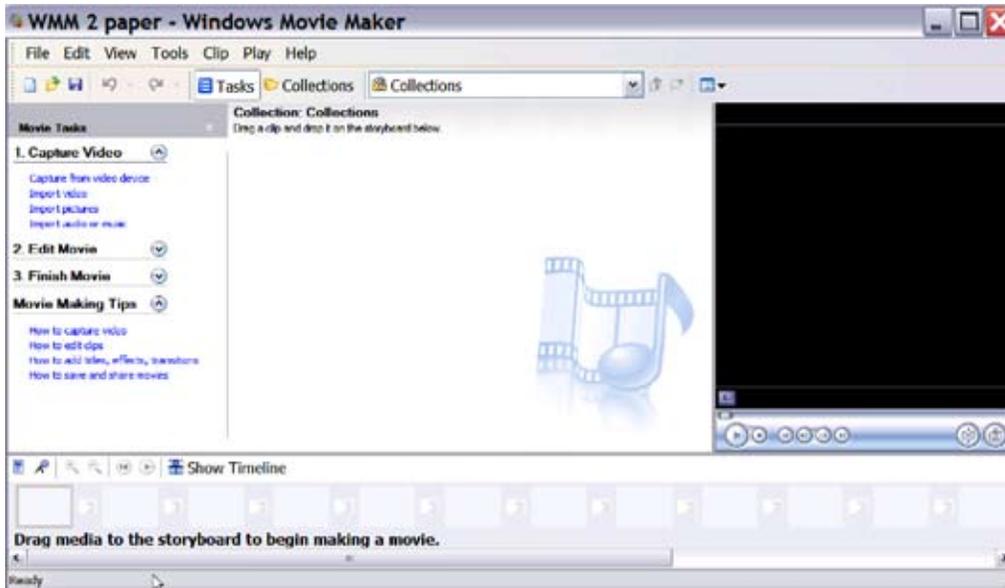


Figure 18

2. Drag and drop the .wmv file into the **Collection** portion of the program in Windows Movie Maker (Figure 19). Push the **Play/Pause** button and begin taking still captures.

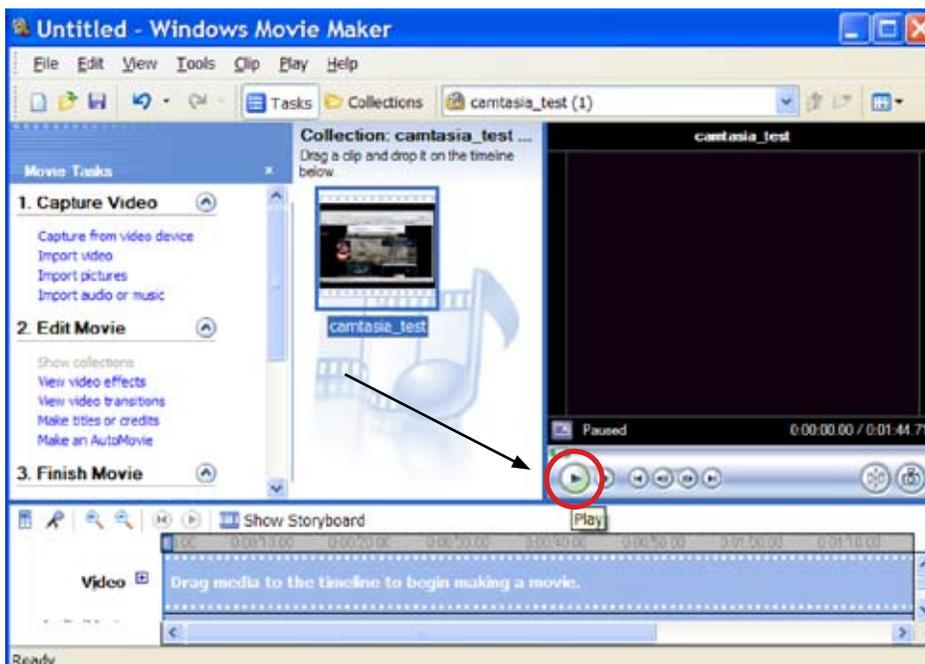


Figure 19

- To take still captures, play your video until you reach the point where a capture is desired and click the **Play/Pause** button (Figure 20).

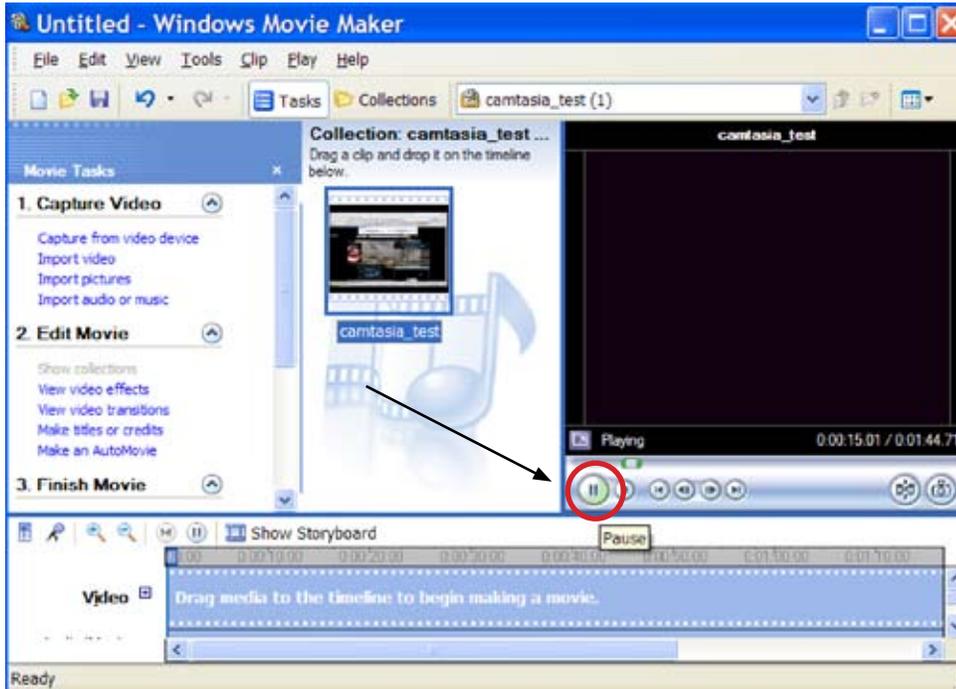


Figure 20

- To take the still, click the **Camera** button in the lower right corner of Windows Movie Maker (Figure 21).

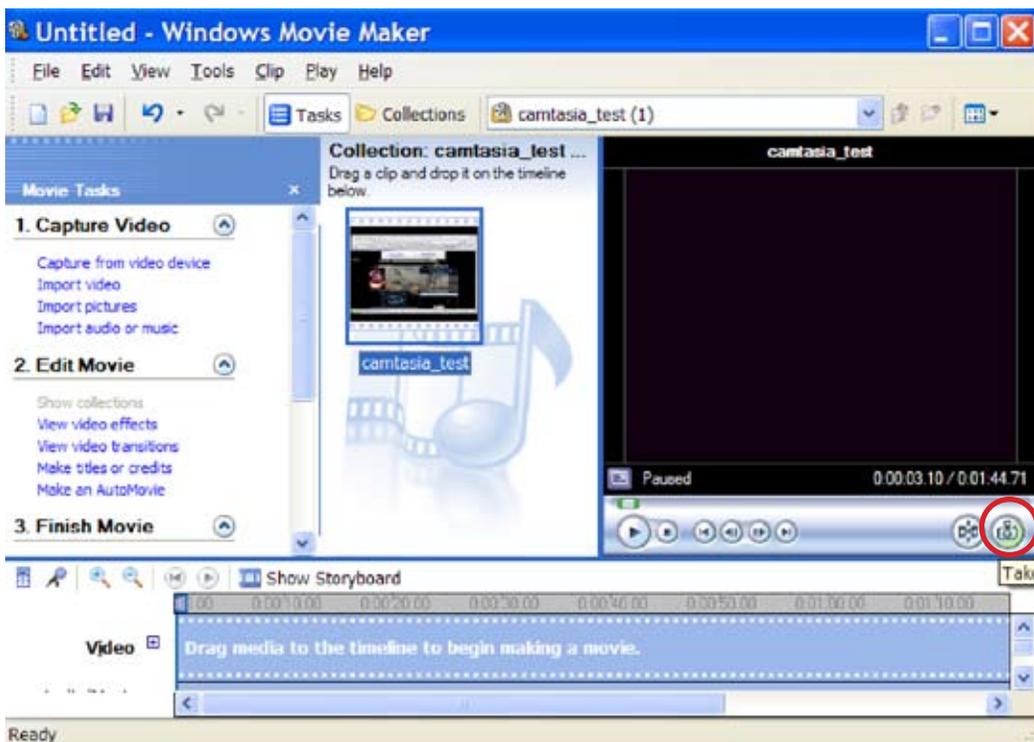


Figure 21

- After you capture the still of the MySpace page, rename and save the file for later use. To do this, choose the desired file format for saving from the pull-down list (Figure 22). This will allow the still picture to be viewed outside of Windows Movie Maker.

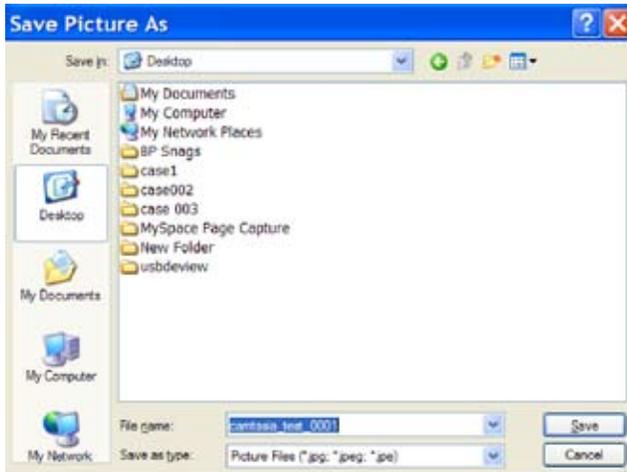


Figure 22

Saving Audio and Video Files Separately Using DownloadHelper

Another consideration in MySpace page capture for evidence file/presentation in court is to have separate file copies of all the audio and video files on the MySpace page. An easy and efficient way to capture and save those files is to use DownloadHelper.

DownloadHelper is an add-on to the FireFox Internet browser. The purpose of this add-on is to capture video, audio and image files from a large number of different Web sites. It works with sites such as YouTube, MySpace, Google Videos and others. If you do not have the FireFox Internet browser or are unsure how to add extensions to your FireFox Internet browser, download and print a copy of *The SEARCH Investigative Toolbar and Other Mozilla Firefox Investigative Extensions* for detailed instructions. This paper is available on the SEARCH Web site at <http://www.search.org/files/pdf/toolbarfirefox.pdf>.

The process for using DownloadHelper to capture video, audio and image files is as follows:

- Locate DownloadHelper by going to the FireFox add-ons page and doing a search in the upper right corner for **DownloadHelper**. After you download and install the DownloadHelper add-on and restart FireFox, a new icon will appear to the right of your address bar (Figure 23). This is the icon that will alert you when there is a video or image on the page that DownloadHelper can capture.



Figure 23

- When DownloadHelper detects something it can capture, the icon will turn from shades of gray to red, blue, and yellow, and become animated and begin to spin (Figure 24).



Figure 24

- When the icon becomes animated, a black pull-down arrow will also appear to the right of the icon, as shown in Figure 25. This pull-down arrow will display what images and videos are available for download.

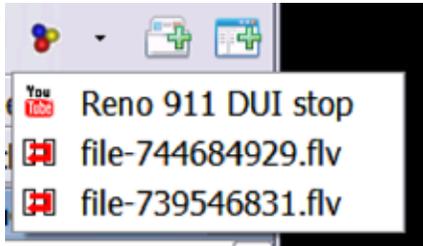


Figure 25

2. Highlight the video you want to download and left-click once. You will be prompted to select where you wish to save it (Figure 26).



Figure 26

3. The video or image will begin to download once the entire file has been fully loaded (Figure 27). You can monitor the status of the download in the bottom status bar of Firefox by using the FireFox download status bar add-on (Figure 28).



Figure 27



Figure 28

- Some sites that are supported by DownloadHelper do not name the videos, even though they are available for download. When this is the case, only numbers will be provided in the pull-down (Figure 29).

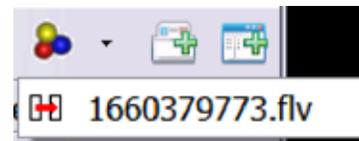


Figure 29

- The pages with only one video and one download listed are uncomplicated. However, some sites have multiple downloads listed with no names listed (Figure 30).

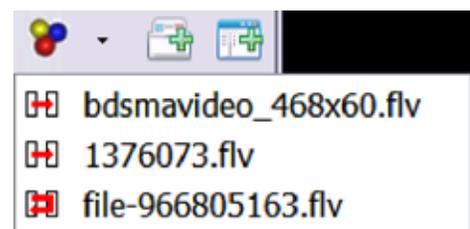


Figure 30

- When multiple downloads are listed, select the top one. This will most likely be the target video, audio or image. A good feature of DownloadHelper is that once the video starts downloading, you can preview the video before it finishes downloading. Simply go to the location where the video was saved and open it there. Once the video starts, you can ensure that you selected the correct target video.
- DownloadHelper saves all video files in the .flv file format. In order to view these videos, you will need a player that can recognize that format. A good, free media player that can play .flv files is VLC media player. A free download can be found at <http://www.videolan.org/vlc/>. Download and install the VLC media player before trying to capture the audio and video files off of the MySpace profile page. Use the VLC media player to open all the files saved with DownloadHelper.

The process for saving audio and video files separately using DownloadHelper is as follows:

1. Using FireFox, open the MySpace page you are trying to capture. You will see that the DownloadHelper icon in the toolbar is gray and not spinning (as shown in Figure 31).



Figure 31

- To get DownloadHelper to recognize the audio and video files on the MySpace page, the audio or video needs to be playing. It is best to capture the audio and video separately for easy reference of which audio or video file is being captured.

2. Press the **Play/Pause** button on the audio player to play the audio clip that might be on the page. Notice that the DownloadHelper icon will have turned into primary colors and begun to spin (as shown in Figure 32).

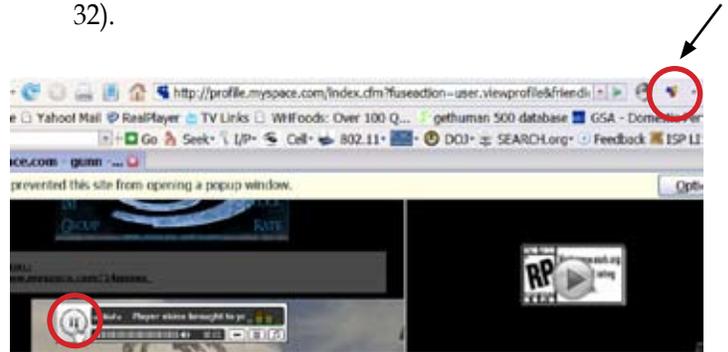


Figure 32

3. Use the pull-down arrow next to the DownloadHelper icon, select the MP3 file (Figure 33) and save it to the desired location (Figure 34).

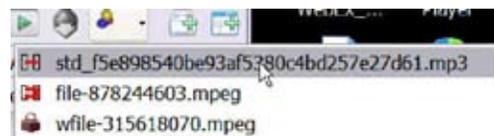


Figure 33

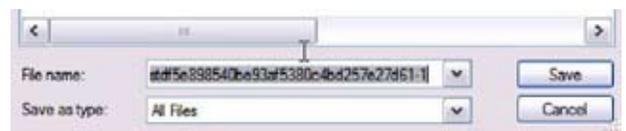


Figure 34

4. Go back to the MySpace page and select the **Refresh** icon (Figure 35). This will clear the DownloadHelper cache and allow you to save the next audio or video file (this step is recommended to keep the process from becoming confusing).



Figure 35

5. Go to the next audio or video file and select **Play** on that one as well (Figure 36). This should activate the DownloadHelper icon (Figure 37). Follow the same saving process on that audio/video as well. The same process will be used for the rest of the audio and video files on the MySpace page.

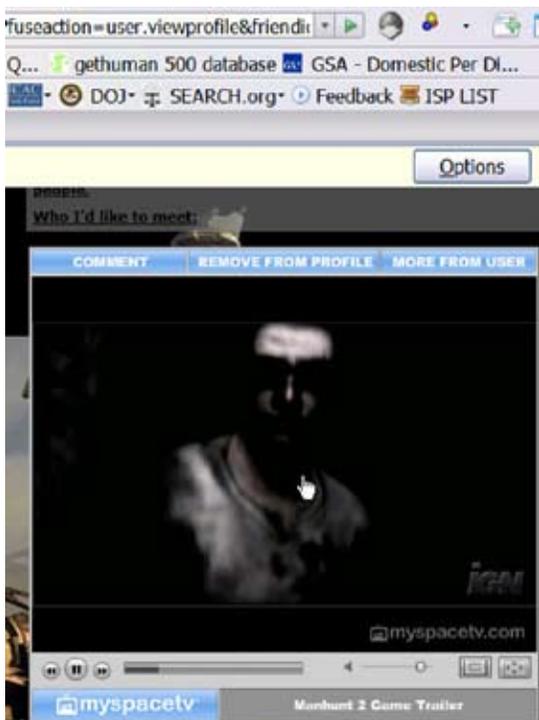


Figure 36



Figure 37

Other Considerations

Another important step in capturing a MySpace profile page for an evidence file/presentation in court is to save the HTML code on the page. This can be achieved by going to View - View Page Source in FireFox. A new window will pop up that will display all of the page source for the MySpace profile page. This can then be saved to your format of choice. It is important to save the profile page source because viewing the source can show any hidden trackers or code that might not show up on the profile page itself. Additionally, persons fluent in HTML should be able to replicate the profile page if they have the whole source code.

Conclusion

After this process is complete, you will have successfully recorded an entire video of navigating a MySpace page, including viewing pictures and blogs, watching videos, listening to music, etc. You will also have still shots of the MySpace page, separate recordings of the audio and video files, and a copy of the profile page source from the time of capture.



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