



## Big Pookiehead Productions

Alexa Lee

**Summary:** Alexa Lee was initially drawn to the high quality of SmartSound’s music, but was skeptical about using SmartSound Software. But after having a chance to use the Sonicfire Pro herself, she quickly realized the not only did the software give her more power than using her existing music libraries, but that she could also maximize her investment in other music sources.

**A**lexa Lee knows what it takes to create an impact with images. After former video journalist and National Correspondent at CNN, she decided to put her experience shooting footage and telling a compelling story to use as a professional videographer. She is currently based in the San Francisco Bay Area and is a founding partner and lead videographer for Big Pookiehead Productions ([www.bigpookiehead.com](http://www.bigpookiehead.com)), which specializes in digital wedding videography and commercial DVD content. From her broadcasting experience, Lee understood that matching the right soundtrack to the on-screen visuals can make a huge difference in the impact of a video.

“For many pieces that I create, the soundtrack is critical,” said Lee. “The music enhances drama, romance, suspense, joy and anticipation. Once you produce something that totally moves you, that’s when you understand the major role the soundtrack played in ripening that emotion. Everything you do can fall flat if the soundtrack is not good.”

When she began shooting wedding videos, Lee quickly realized that being able to create high-quality soundtracks was a potential source of frequent frustration. Despite her desire to get the best music options possible, her options seemed limited:

- **Standard royalty-free music libraries:** Like many other Web and video professionals, Lee had spent money on stock royalty-free music libraries. Unfortunately, most library tracks only come in set lengths (15 seconds, 30 seconds, one minute, etc.), and she was spending additional time editing her music to fit the visuals. Plus, she considers herself to be “very, very picky about the music I use,” and the quality of the music was uneven. “The quality of many music libraries is inconsistent,” she said. “That alone can add up to hours spend auditioning music”
- **Creating her own music:** Lee experimented with programs such as Apple Soundtrack, which asks the user to construct songs from pre-existing loops of instruments. In the end, she said this wasn’t a productive solution for her since “the time it takes to create something great is much too much for me.”
- **Music from clients:** Frequently, Lee’s clients would suggest certain musical pieces that they wanted to include in their videos. Although she wanted to respect these wishes, often the music wouldn’t be appropriate for her editing style, or the mood she was attempting to create.



“Either the music was overbearing or editing it to fit the piece was cumbersome and time consuming,” Lee said. “I like music that is high in quality, but does not overpower the story I am trying to tell.”

Lee first heard about SmartSound through a friend, and later did some research on professional videographers’ Web boards and found that there was a strong group of users who were extremely devoted to the company. While searching for a piece of music to punch up a high impact video, she listened to a sample of music from the SmartSound Web site. Almost immediately, she was hooked.

“The quality of the SmartSound music is excellent,” she said. “The music has a full, multi-instrument sound. It sounds professional and well-composed – never a cheap mish-mash of musical instruments or something a robot threw together. I get compliments from clients regarding our music selections all the time.”

However, Lee was not aware at first that SmartSound’s music CDs work exclusively with its software, such as Sonicfire Pro. At first, this was a disappointment to her, but after purchasing a copy of Sonicfire Pro she realized how useful the software could be to her.

“Believe me, the software is not a drawback; it is a great tool I now have in my editing suite,” she said. “Seriously, it’s like magic, with the way you can rearrange things and have them come out perfectly. The software is what makes it all come out fast and usable.”

Sonicfire Pro also gave Lee the option to continue to use her existing music libraries along with SmartSound music to create soundtracks. This allowed her to not waste her previous investments, while still creating the highest quality soundtracks possible.

Lee not only uses Sonicfire Pro to score video productions, she also uses it for creating DVDs. Sonicfire Pro allows users to easily create music and effects for DVD menus that are not stale and repetitious, and yet are also seamless.

“You can fit a tune to the exact measurement of a looping menu with no problem, and without an odd jump or strange sounding beginning or ending,” she said. “If you are doing any kind of corporate or commercial DVD, this is a must-have.”

Not only does Lee love the quality of SmartSound’s music, but she also appreciates that it is completely royalty-free. This gives her peace of mind knowing that no matter how the video is distributed, she does not have to worry about copyrights.

“You know you are creating something that can be shared and seen by many, without hesitation or excuses,” she said. “It is more professional – period.”