

VBrick StreamPlayer

StreamPlayer v4.4 Release Notes



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About VBrick Systems

Founded in 1997, VBrick Systems, an ISO 9001 certified vendor, is a privately held company that has enjoyed rapid growth by helping our customers successfully introduce mission critical video applications across their enterprise networks. Since our founding, VBrick has been setting the standard for quality, performance and innovation in the delivery of live and stored video over IP networks—LANs, WANs and the Internet. With thousands of video appliances installed world-wide, VBrick is the recognized leader in reliable, high-performance, easy-to-use networked video solutions.

VBrick is an active participant in the development of industry standards and continues to play an influential role in the Internet Streaming Media Alliance (ISMA), the MPEG Industry Forum, and Internet2. In 1998 VBrick invented and shipped the world's first MPEG Video Network Appliance designed to provide affordable DVD-quality video across the network. Since then, VBrick's video solutions have grown to include Video on Demand, Management, Security and Access Control, Scheduling, and Rich Media Integration. VBrick solutions are successfully supporting a broad variety of applications including distance learning and training, conferencing and remote office communications, security, process monitoring, traffic monitoring, business and news feeds to the desktop, webcasting, corporate communications, collaboration, command and control, and telemedicine. VBrick serves customers in education, government, healthcare, and financial services markets among others.

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Product Overview	1
What's New in StreamPlayer v4.4	2
Installation	3
Caveats	3

This document provides release notes for the VBrick StreamPlayer Product Family of software applications, and includes the following. Any information contained within this document is to be considered VBrick Systems customer confidential and should not be reproduced nor distributed to non-VBrick Systems customers.

Product Overview

The StreamPlayer Product Family empowers viewers to watch live high quality MPEG video and audio on PCs anywhere the network reaches. StreamPlayer automatically displays a “Program Guide” that lists live or stored videos that are available for viewing. Users simply click on the program name, and they are instantly watching television quality video on their PCs. StreamPlayer also allows Closed Captions to be displayed on screen for MPEG-1, MPEG-2, and MPEG-4 streams. StreamPlayer Family consists of the following products:

- **StreamPlayer WM** – plays MPEG-1 and Windows Media streams. Can also play MPEG-2 video if the user has a preexisting MPEG-2 decoder (a DVD player for example) on their machine.
- **StreamPlayer** – is a free desktop installed software program used either for viewing MPEG-1, MPEG-4, and Windows Media streams or files. MPEG-2 viewing is only available with this free program if an MPEG-2 decoder (e.g. a DVD player) is present on the computer.
- **StreamPlayer with MPEG-2 Playback** – includes all of the functionality of StreamPlayer as well as the ability to view MPEG-2 streams or files.
- **StreamPlayer Plus** – is a desktop install version that, in addition to viewing MPEG-1, MPEG-2, MPEG-4, and Windows Media streams, allows recording and basic editing of MPEG-1 and MPEG-2 video streams and recording of MPEG-4 and Windows Media streams. Additionally, as part of the StreamPlayer Plus package, a software component called the Capture Driver may be installed. Capture Driver provides the ability to accept an MPEG-1, MPEG-2, or MPEG-4 stream and convert it into uncompressed digital video. Capture Driver can be used with any software program which inputs video using PC capture cards. It allows the video to be more easily converted to .jpg images, edited, or re-encoded into other non-MPEG video formats using third party software.
- **StreamPlayer License Server** – Manages concurrent MPEG-2 license usage.
- **StreamPlayer Web Deployment Kit** – provides a free software component used for viewing within a Web Page. Administrators can use files installed by [Setupstreamplayerwebdeploymentkit_4_4_0.exe](#) to setup web pages that automatically download the components necessary for viewing MPEG-1, MPEG-2, and MPEG-4 streams for easy distribution to viewers.

Note StreamPlayer Plus software can be installed on Windows XP (Home and Professional Editions) and Windows 2000 (Professional Edition) only.

What's New in StreamPlayer v4.4

- StreamPlayer supports MPEG-2 unicast over IPv6 transport on XP and newer versions of Windows. Users must manually enter the IPv6 unicast address and port number from which they will receive the MPEG-2 unicast.
- Users can select and run multiple bit rate WM streams from the StreamPlayer interface by selecting the desired stream in the **Program Name** field.
- When selecting a multiple bit rate WM stream, if the **Kbits/sec** column (see **Preferences > Custom Columns**) displays **Auto**, StreamPlayer will auto-select the stream with the most appropriate bit rate.
- **Open Options** have been removed from StreamPlayer **Preferences**. StreamPlayer always uses the latest Windows Media Player installed on your computer.
- The **Anti-Pixelator** utility addresses a compatibility issue with CyberLink's PowerDVD.

Anti-Pixelator Utility

The StreamPlayer installation folder includes a utility to work around compatibility issues with CyberLink's PowerDVD. If PowerDVD is installed on your computer, you may experience pixelated video when playing movies through the Windows Media Player. To work around this issue, run [AntiPixelator.exe](#) and then reboot your computer.



Features from Previous Releases

- A separate Setup exe ([Setup_WM_StreamPlayer_4_4_0.exe](#)) now available that only installs those components required for windows media playback. This setup will not prompt for a license file.
- Ability to playback Windows Media streams
- Ability to record Windows Media streams.
- Supports Source Specific Multicast playback for the 232.x.x.x address space.
- Playback of MPEG-1, MPEG-2, and MPEG-4 streams
- Support for MPEG-1, MPEG-2, and MPEG-4 Closed Captioning
- Recording and Hinting of MPEG-4 streams
- Recording of MPEG-1 and MPEG-2 streams
- Capture Driver support for MPEG-1, MPEG-2, and MPEG-4 streams
- StreamPlayer is provided in several different versions, each of which support playback of different video types.
- MPEG-4 stream playback uses the correct pixel aspect ratio
- VBrick capture driver is not installed by default. User needs to go to the maintenance part of the Setup to install the capture driver.
- Supports silent (user interaction free) installation
- Playback of HTTP Tunneled and RTSP Interleaved MPEG-4 streams
- Events for Meta Data and Closed captioning during playback

- Support for recording MPEG-4 Meta Data to File
- Support for VBrick Metered Streams (using RTCP sender reports from VBrick Encoder for MPEG4 streams)
- VBrick MCS Player Control .cab is included as part of StreamPlayer Family.

Installation

Detailed installation instructions are available in the *StreamPlayer Administrator Guide*. Please reference this document for instructions on how to install all of the StreamPlayer components. Capture driver is separately installed by rerunning the Setup after installing the StreamPlayer or StreamPlayer Plus software. If there is an earlier version of StreamPlayer or StreamPlayer Plus already present in the system the Setup program automatically upgrades the old installation to the new version.

Note When installing StreamPlayer for the first time or re-installing a newer version, the computer should be restarted before launching the application if prompted.

Caveats

This section addresses known issues in this release, most of which have an easy workaround. For more information about any item, or help with an issue not listed here, contact your reseller or VBrick Support Services.

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- StreamPlayer is not supported on machines running Windows 98.
 - Do not use **Control Panel > Add or Remove Programs** to modify or repair the StreamPlayer installation. To update or reinstall StreamPlayer, double-click on the setup program and follow the prompts.
 - Changing the encoder settings during playback will lead to playback freezing
 - Display card drivers on XP machines should be up to date for the closed caption overlay to work properly
 - If using a Tablet PC in Tablet mode, you may experience 100% CPU utilization. For best results, do not view video in Tablet mode.
 - In some cases, users may receive this error message when attempting to play a video:
0xC00D10B3: Windows Media Player cannot play this file. Connect to the Internet or insert the removable media on which the file is located, and then try to play the file again.

This problem occurs because Microsoft Windows Media Player automatically tries to detect whether the player is connected to a network. If Windows Media Player cannot detect a network connection, and if you try to play online content, you receive an error. This problem may also occur if your browser is set to **Work Offline**. To force the player to always assume that the player is connected to a network, follow these steps:

1. Go to **Tools > Options**.
 2. On the **Player** tab, under **Player settings**, check the **Connect to the Internet** (overrides other commands) check box. Please see the following URL for more information: <http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US;838101>
- We do not recommend running StreamPlayer Plus on Tablet PCs while in Tablet Mode. Running Tablet PCs in laptop mode works fine.

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- When playing an HTTP tunneled or RTSP Interleaved stream, Windows Media Player may take several seconds to close after clicking on the **Close** button.
 - The **Wrap** function in MPEG-4 recording not supported. MPEG-4 files created in batch can be played individually but multiple files cannot be selected and played as a group.
 - Do not change the encoded bit rate during the recording process. If the bit rate is changed on the encoder during recording, the resulting file will not be valid.
 - The recorder starts recording when it gets an "I" or Key frame. Therefore, long intervals between "I" frames (which is set on the VBrick MPEG-4 encoder) delays the recording process and might slightly reduce the length of the actual recording.
 - When playing an SDP file, a popup window might appear when using Windows Media Player, indicating that "The selected file has an extension that is not recognized by Windows Media Player, but the Player may still be able to play it." Selecting "Don't ask me again for this extension." and entering **Yes** plays the video.
 - When StreamPlayer or StreamPlayer Plus are used to access the EtherneTV-NXG VoD server in conjunction with the Cisco VPN client, users should install the VPN client version 4.0.2 or above. This is a limitation in previous versions of the Cisco VPN client.
 - Errors in file recording and local file playback can be caused by decoder conflicts. For example, other software players and StreamPlayer/StreamPlayer Plus use .mp4 file types. The last one to be installed is the one with which the file type is associated. If another software player is installed after StreamPlayer, it associates the .mp4 file extension with itself. File associations are set and changed in File Explorer, Tools >> Folder Options, under the File Types tab. To change the association, go to **MP4** and associate it with Windows Media Player. If that doesn't work, uninstall the other software player and reinstall StreamPlayer Plus.
 - Editing options not currently available for MPEG-4 streams.
 - An application error occurs in XP installations if there are previous uninstalled versions on the desktop. The error is on installation only and does not affect operation. There appears to be incompatibility between the installation and Windows HotFix (SP2) Q328310. To avoid the error, do a fresh install (i.e., uninstall all old versions of the StreamPlayer before proceeding with the new installation).
 - Statistics within Windows Media Player will not display for live streams through Windows Media Player 7.1.
 - An error results if an attempt is made to edit or FTP multiple saved files that were not created in the same batch recording. Only files in the same batch recording can be FTP'd concurrently.
 - On rare occasions while un-installing StreamPlayer Plus, the uninstall program might complain that it is unable to remove the file **VBExchange.exe** because it is locked. In this case, please wait for about a minute before proceeding with the uninstall.
 - Closed Caption data may lag slightly behind the video. The delay is not significantly different than what one would see with Closed Captioning on a television.
 - On XP, Closed Captioning Overlay works best when Service Pack 1 or higher is installed.
 - On XP, if the latest Direct-X version is installed on the machine, it is recommended that the driver for the display adapter be updated.
 - When Closed Captioning Overlay on video is selected, statistics will not display the selected and actual frame rate.
 - Windows Media Player windows need to be closed before changes in the Closed Captioning settings on StreamPlayer or StreamPlayer Plus are registered.

- For PCs running XP, only one Windows Media Player window can provide Closed Captioning Overlay unless Service Pack 1 or higher is installed.
- On PCs running XP, when Closed Caption Overlay is enabled for MPEG-1 or MPEG-4, the video size is twice as normal.
- On MPEG-4 streams that contain only closed caption stream (no audio or video) playback will display Closed Caption only in the overlay mode.





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