

Stupendous Bundle: iMovie Plug Ins 1.15 by Stupendous Software

MSRP: 200.00 Street price: (online via vendor store only) 200.00

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DESCRIPTION (what's it do?): A huge collection of iMovie plug ins to do just about anything you can think of with iMovie - from titles to effects to PIP

MIN. SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS: Vendor lists OS9: iMovie 2.1.1 and/or OSX: iMovie 2.1.2 or iMovie 3.0.x but you must assume the minimum requirements for those as well. iMovie requires the following so you'll need at least that much. I'd recommend 512 or better RAM and OSX.3x as well: QuickTime 6.3 or later; Macintosh PowerPC G3 or G4 processor (700 MHz or greater G3 recommended); Mac OS X v10.1.5 or later; 256 MB RAM recommended; 2 GB of free hard disk space; Macintosh with built-in FireWire ports; 1024 x 768 screen resolution or higher

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: Well, with tutorials available from their web site, the installation and operation is still a little tricky but well worth the effort. It's simply a matter of placing the plug-ins into the iMovie plug-ins folder and you are ready to roll.

WHAT I FOUND: The output from most of the items in this enormous bundle is really excellent and not too difficult once you get the hang of things. The final results make you look like a real pro -- as long as you don't "overdo it," as with any effect.

HOW EASY WAS INSTALLATION?: Although a more automatic installer would be nice, this is no chore either.

LIKES? : I love the titles; especially the box outlines. Stupendous lives up to its name with smooth quality in both QT and full sized digital video. I found the banners and ascii text options to be really easy to configure as well. The effects and titles are fun and make full use of the accelerated performance of Panther's graphics. You'll want a little more RAM but, again, when not overused, the results are excellent. Some great demos to download and it is great to have the tutorials online (but that is a whole 'nother review...). The split-screens are fun and easy. The smoke and fog effects are nice in the titles (unlike some other vendor versions). I do like a few of the unique zoom effects that rotate the images - great with stills to iMovie. You can purchase either this bundle or each plug-in for 25.00 each.

DISLIKES? : Well, like most bundles, I love a few and could live without some. Maybe a targeted pack for "family fun" and/or "business pack" would address some specific needs. A pretty hefty price tag, however, you get a lot for your money. It might be nice to look at what the other guys are offering and just omit the ones that EVERYONE offers, however, if you are choosing one set of plug-ins only, this is a great choice.

HOW DOES THIS PRODUCT COMPARE? : With products from GeeThree, eZedia and Apple, itself; Stupendous provides some unique items that are great to have in my iMovie holster. Again, the title outline box, color effects and glows are excellent. For things like "sepia," "noise" and "smoke," these filters are fairly interchangeable. The "packs" are great to get rolling and to try a few key items. Pricing is about on par if you add up the competitors' plug in packages to equate the mountain you get in this bundle so, again, check out the demos and buy what you want/need/like. Each company has its own personality and a few stand out items. S/S offers a lot for the buck.

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND?: Absolutely the new favorite set of plug-ins with output for the advanced consumer with professional results. Smooth, easy to use and first class output for anyone ready to move up a notch in iMovie.

TEST SYSTEM: Apple Titanium PowerBook G4 500 - 1Gb RAM - 10.3.1

FINAL THOUGHTS: In all honesty, my only real problem with Stupendous Software is their web site. Complete and full of information, however, the "feel" and appearance of the site are not on par with the quality of their products so it can be deceiving. With cleaner graphics, navigation and more polished appearance overall, I think it will translate into more sales. I'd like to see a few iMovie samples right up front b each item and smaller, more concise logos and buttons. The product info is all there.

If you are looking for one choice in plug-ins or that "one hot" item you need to make your iLife output jump out, Stupendous Software offers an outstanding solution for anyone frustrated by the limitation of the standard sets that come with iMovie.

OVERALL RATING: 4 out of 5 / Advanced amateur, prosumer...
For more information, visit: <http://www.stupendous-software.com>

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