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Cyberlink Powerdirector 6 - PC

Does this cheap alternative fit the bill?

by Stephen Patrick published on 17 April 2007

If you own a camcorder, the chances are that you've quickly outgrown the basic editing tools that will have been bundled with it. So, there is a growing market for editing software that allows the amateur user to get the most from their footage.

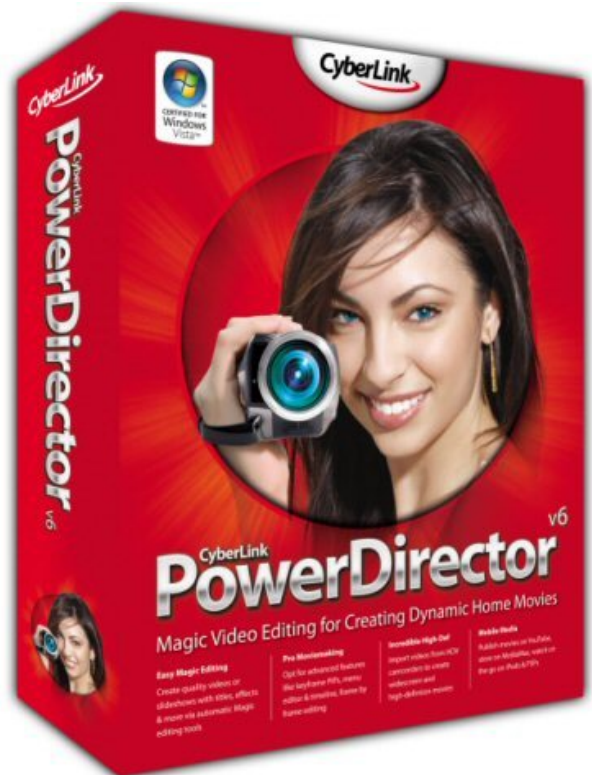
If you've used the previous version of PowerDirector you may be a little scared to venture anywhere near it again, as it left a great deal to be designed. However, take it from us that version 6 is a vast improvement.

Once installed, you'll find the interface is a little more basic than most video packages. It still works in the same way as most though, allowing you to import raw footage and then guiding you through the editing and final output of your movie. Four buttons across the top of the screen concisely define this as Capture, Edit, Produce and Create Disc.

Once you've imported your footage to your PC, it's the edit screen that is the most important feature. This is a large area that allows you to edit either in storyboard or timeline mode. If you choose the latter version you'll be able to create a master video track and add other effects such as audio and picture-in-picture modes.

One of the big problems with earlier versions was the lack of controls for menus. Thankfully, this has been streamlined and its now easier to set them up using the Menu Wizard. When it comes to giving it a more professional feel, you can add chapter markers and menu controls. There are a wide array of the latter but they're not the most sophisticated, so once you've experimented with the package we'd suggest making templates of your own.

The Produce button takes your editing film one stage further and gets it prepared for output. You



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can choose what format to save it in, whether you want to burn it to a Hi-Def disc or not and even whether to upload it to a sharing site, such as YouTube or MySpace.

As with other similar packages, if you simply want to bypass the editing stage and simply take what is on your camera and turn it into a disc for sharing with others, you can use the built-in Magic Movie Wizard. It's easy to use and you do get a finished product but we'd advise you learn to use the editing tools, it may take longer but you'll be glad of it in the long run.

VERDICT

Cyberlink Powerdirector 6 comes in at a great price for an editing suite and because it's easy to get to grips with, it's ideal for the first time user, or someone who merely wants to occasionally dabble with video.

At a glance

What is it?

Video editing software

Good

Cheap, easy to use

Bad

Poor wizard functions, not many template

Verdict

It's cheap and easy to use but it won't challenge more serious packages, as it simply doesn't have the range of features

Price £55

Our score

7/10

Your score

8/10