



PianoGroove Finds its Rhythm with ScreenFlow

How PianoGroove Founder Hayden Hill is using ScreenFlow from Telestream to create videos for step-by-step online jazz piano lessons

"Our online video library continues to grow and expand because of the comprehensive toolset, user-friendliness, affordability, and convenience of ScreenFlow."

- Hayden Hill, Founder of PianoGroove.com, London, UK

Becoming a jazz piano virtuoso takes years of dedication. Prior to the online music education revolution, this process meant working with a private tutor or attending schools. Taking online jazz piano lessons became easier in 2015 when accomplished Jazz Pianist Hayden Hill founded PianoGroove, an online jazz piano school and community for like-minded musicians who share a passion for jazz.

PianoGroove's step-by-step online instruction is designed to give aspiring jazz pianists an effective way to learn jazz, blues, funk, gospel, and Brazilian styles from exceptionally talented teachers when and where they wish. Designed to clearly convey jazz techniques from simple to complex, PianoGroove's signature multi-layered video layout presents the following synchronous elements:

- A view of the teacher's hands moving over the keyboard at the bottom third of the screen
- Synchronized light up keys on an electronic keyboard mid-screen
- Musical notation that scrolls on the top layer
- Audio of the piano music being played, and
- The teacher's verbal instruction and narration

Today, PianoGroove has grown from a single instructor, Hayden Hill, to a team of eight internationally renowned and Grammy© Award winning instructors recruited from various jazz hotbeds, like New York, New Orleans, and Seattle. As a content-driven business, Hill relies on ScreenFlow video editing, screen capture and recording software from Telestream to help create the hundreds of video tutorials he posts annually on PianoGroove's website and YouTube channel.

THE CHALLENGE

To keep online students engaged and progressing, PianoGroove must continually produce and upload new online videos. According to Hill, “Adding lessons consistently is one of the most important aspects of running an online music school.”

To keep the online video library fresh, Hill posts new content weekly, including lessons covering a wide range of theory, genres and styles. All pre-produced video tutorials—for both the website and social media—have been created with ScreenFlow, which Hill has been using since his company’s 2015 inception.

While Hill began by creating, editing, and posting all the new videos himself, ScreenFlow’s user-friendliness makes it possible to quickly teach other instructors to create their own videos. This includes marking off segments of each video lesson into the six or so chapter markings that allow PianoGroove students to quickly find and skip to the content they’re most interested in.

The subscriber-based website, PianoGroove.com, is the company’s primary streaming media platform for online learning. However, PianoGroove also makes some free videos available on YouTube as a marketing strategy to introduce and direct those searching for jazz piano tutorials to their website community and service.

Once logged into the PianoGroove.com website, students get their own personal dashboard where they can track their progress, make practice notes, set calendar reminders, and bookmark lessons. They can also access the video lessons, syllabuses, group Zoom classes and other course materials, check-out FAQs in the community forums, as well as watch special weekly live seminars.

Over the years, PianoGroove has grown dramatically, both in terms of its subscriber base and online media library. The service currently has:

- 600 videos and growing on the website
- Over 70 videos on YouTube
- Over 78,000 YouTube subscribers
- 6,000, 000 views on YouTube
- A growing subscriber base of students from over 80 countries



THE SOLUTION

ScreenFlow is PianoGroove’s video editing and creation software of choice because it encompasses all the essential video tools and capabilities Hill and his team need to produce professional looking piano tutorials from start to finish. And at \$149 for the basic software and \$209 for the (Mac-only) premium edition, its affordability allowed Hill to launch and grow his online business.

Designed for easy video sharing, ScreenFlow enables a wide range of video creation tasks including:

- Video editing
- Video recording
- Capturing all or selected portions of desktop screen imagery
- Adding transitions and fades between shots and scenes
- Importing and exporting media

Hill generally considers other video production software on the market to be too expensive and time-consuming to learn because their feature sets are broader than what the PianoGroove application requires. Whereas ScreenFlow’s features and capabilities streamline and speed up the tutorial creation process.

“ScreenFlow is rich with features and capabilities yet easy to master. What I’ve found is that it’s easier to teach a jazz musician how to create and edit videos with ScreenFlow than it is to find video editors who are familiar with jazz techniques and specialized jargon. The fact that it’s easy and intuitive for people to learn and use means that our instructors can help keep our online library growing with fresh new how-tos on popular jazz genres and styles.”

- Hayden Hill, Founder of PianoGroove.com,
London, UK

THE PRODUCTION SET-UP

In Hill’s London home studio, ScreenFlow is the cornerstone of the PianoGroove video production setup. And the equipment there has been chosen to ensure consistently high quality. For example, instead of relying on natural ambient light levels, which can vary depending upon the time of day or weather, he uses Protonics LED studio lighting panels, positioned so that the light shines directly onto the keyboard without causing shadows.

Hill’s production equipment includes:

AUDIO	VIDEO
Shure SM7b podcasting mic	Sony 4K Handycam Camcorder
Focusrite Scarlett Solo 3rd Gen	Telestream ScreenFlow desktop software
Cloudlifter CL-1 Mic Activator	26-inch Apple iMac workstation
Apple Logic Pro X Digital Audio Workstation	Protonics LED lighting panels
Avid Sibelius music notation software	Manfrotto tripods
	Foliovision FV Video Player WordPress plug-in
	MIDiculous MIDI software to generate electronic piano keyboard

The PianoGroove production setup is also compact enough that Hill can pack the key pieces of equipment—such as the microphone, camera, and tripod—into a carry-on to take on a plane. Any items that are too big to pack, such as his piano, he rents from local retailers at his destinations. Being able to keep his operation humming while on the road is important because he regularly travels in search of new instructors, as well as to immerse himself in the best musical performances the world’s jazz hotspots have to offer.

THE WORKFLOW

The PianoGroove workflow is designed to produce the tri-layered instructional interface that makes it easier for students to follow and grasp the teacher’s verbal instruction, the playing technique, and the corresponding musical notation and keys being played, all at once.

The following audio, video, and data elements are mixed and layered in ScreenFlow:

- The overhead video of hands playing the electronic keyboard is shot by the 4K Sony Handycam. The footage then feeds into ScreenFlow software
- The instructor’s narration and piano MIDI is recorded in Logic Pro X digital audio workstation
- The piano audio and narration are exported as audio files
- The piano performance is exported as a MIDI file
- The MIDI file is pulled into MIDiculous software to generate the light-up keyboard that shows which keys are being pressed
- The lesson notation graphics are created in Sibelius by hand
- The Sibelius notation is exported as a JPEG file, and pulled into ScreenFlow, and layered over the piano video
- ScreenFlow’s screen capture feature captures the light-up keyboard generated by MIDiculous

ScreenFlow precisely synchronizes all these elements into the final product whereby the music notation layer is over the light-up keyboard layer, which is over the video of the hands playing the piano.

THE RESULTS

PianoGroove offers aspiring jazz pianists an online education journey from beginning to advanced levels of instruction, with the opportunity to delve into all genres and styles of improvised music.

Unlike in-person instruction, PianoGroove students watch online videos on demand, and review the content as often as they like in order to master it. The FV Player video plug-in that the PianoGroove website uses lets students play and rewind videos, fast forward and jump between chapter markings, and control the playback speed. There's also an A/B loop button on the player that lets users jump the content back by a desired amount so they can repeatedly review and practice content of interest.

Check out these sites for more information:

For PianoGroove, visit <https://www.pianogroove.com/>

Watch a sample video tutorial here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=noI5v6hcrLM>

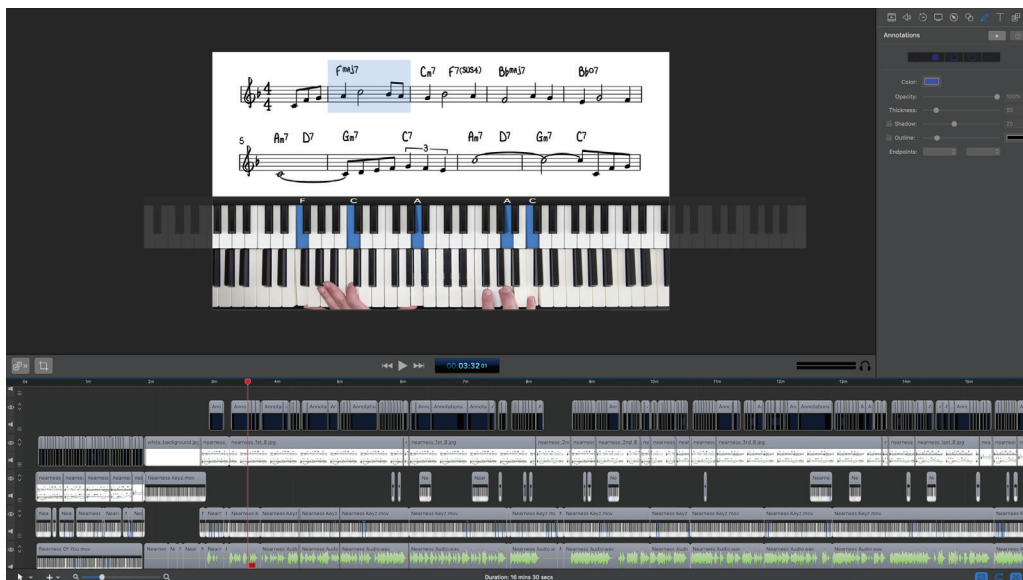
And find out how ScreenFlow from Telestream can enhance your video communications and marketing outreach at:

<https://www.telestream.net/screenflow/overview.htm>

“ScreenFlow makes time-consuming tasks—like screen capture, video recording, editing, and sharing—accessible from a single intuitive user interface so there’s no need to shuttle between different software environments.

This reliable, streamlined production helps us maintain a consistently high-quality user experience even as we scale up to produce new tutorials more quickly. You can be the best teacher in the world, but if your online videos are poorly done, with bad quality visuals or audio, it’ll detract from what you’re trying to impart to your students.”

--Hayden Hill, Founder of PianoGroove.com,
London, UK



Telestream ScreenFlow Software

