



*Another Mohawk Man Creation
By Jay Jennings*

<http://SonicMemo.com>

Sonic Memo v2.0

Another Mohawk Man Creation
Copyright 2003 by Jay Jennings
All rights reserved.

<http://SonicMemo.com>

This is not a free tool. If you absolutely must pass it on to someone to look at, please do so only if you know the person is honorable about paying for software that they end up using.

Thank you.

Jay Jennings
jay@jayjennings.com



PS – Be sure and check the following web page for last minute changes or instructions:

<http://sonicmemo.com/updates.html>

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	3
Introduction	4
Installation.....	5
Sonic Memo 7-Step Quick Start.....	6
The Sonic Memo Program - A Walkthrough	10
Killer eBay Descriptions	20
Recording Your Message	22
Technical Stuff for Non-Geeks.....	26
Time To Take Out The Competition.....	28
Are You Guilty of These Common Web Audio Mistakes?	29
Ideas For Using Sonic Memo	30
Bonus Articles On Using Web Site Audio	32
Streaming MP3 Files That Even Dial-Up Users Can Hear	33
Using Talking Testimonials To Increase Sales (part 1)	36
Using Talking Testimonials To Increase Sales (part 2)	39

Introduction

Sonic Memo is a utility that allows you to put streaming audio quickly and easily onto your web site. It was designed for folks with a few qualifications:

1. You must be able to record your own MP3 file (or find one somewhere that you want to use) – and don't worry, it's not that hard.
2. You must be comfortable copying and pasting a few lines of HTML into your current web page.
3. You need to be able to use FTP to copy files to your web server.

If you qualify, get ready, because Sonic Memo is going to rock your world!

Putting audio into your website breaks down into these steps:

1. Record or find an MP3 file to use.
2. Launch the Sonic Memo utility and have it generate some code.
3. Paste the generated code into your web page.
4. Upload the revised web page to your site along with the MP3 audio file and the Sonic Memo player files.

That's it, man! Once you've done this a couple times you should be able to put up a greeting in less than five minutes – from start to finish. In fact, just for the fun of it I tried it out and did the whole thing (including recording a greeting) in just under 2.5 minutes!

And Sonic Memo isn't just for normal web sites, either. One great use for it is to insert audio descriptions into eBay auctions. Instead of using text to tell bidders about your item, tell them about it in your own voice!

Installation

All of the Sonic memo files should be in a folder on your hard drive. In that folder are the following files/folders:

```
images/
    money6.jpg
    qn_for_you_01.jpg
license.txt
mp3files/
    sample.mp3
quicknote/
    qn-plain.html
    qn-tancard.html
    qn-whitecard.html
    (plus 11 different graphics files - .gif)
readmefirst.txt
sample.html
sm2.swf
smplayers/
    (46 files that start with "a_sm" and end with ".swf")
sonicmemo_config.xml
sonicmemo.html
sonicmemo.pdf
```

You're all ready to go on your local machine, but you still need to get your web server ready to serve up the files (don't worry, there's no real "techie" stuff here)...

To install on your web server, upload the **mp3files**, **smplayers**, and **quicknote** directories (and their contents) to your web site using your ftp client (the same way you upload your regular HTML pages).

Those three directories should be placed in the same location as your regular HTML pages.

That's all there is to it, now *you're ready to rock and roll!*

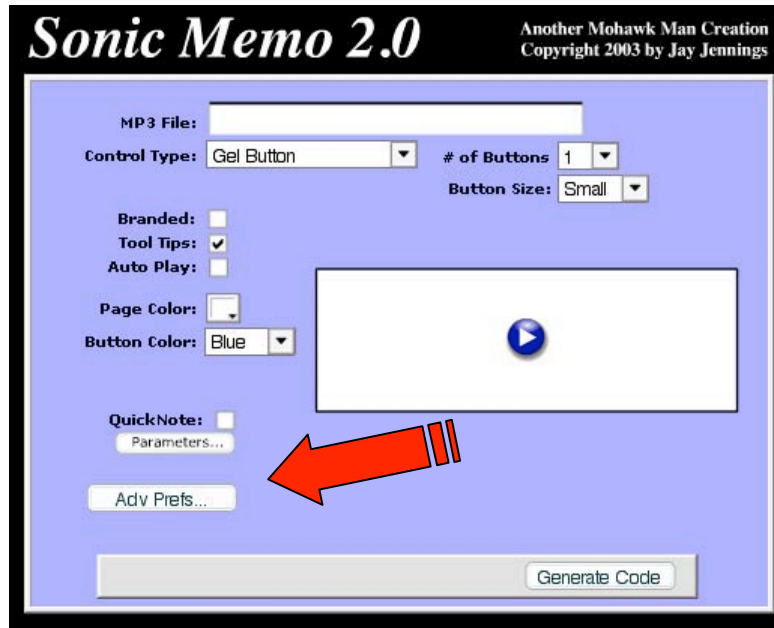
Sonic Memo 7-Step Quick Start

To show you how easy it is to use Sonic Memo to make your web site talk, I've supplied a sample MP3 recording and a sample HTML page. Just follow along with the steps below and see how easy it is to make your web site talk! (Don't worry if you don't understand something right now – this is the “turn your brain off and follow directions” part of the manual.)

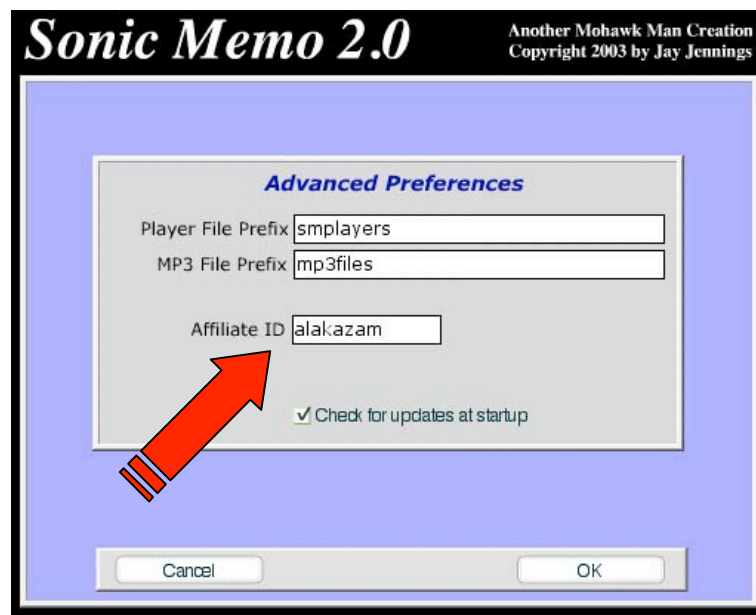
1. Double-click the file `sonicmemo.html` to launch the program in your web browser and when the title screen comes up, gaze with rapture at the cool logo. When you've tired of that, click the **Continue** button.



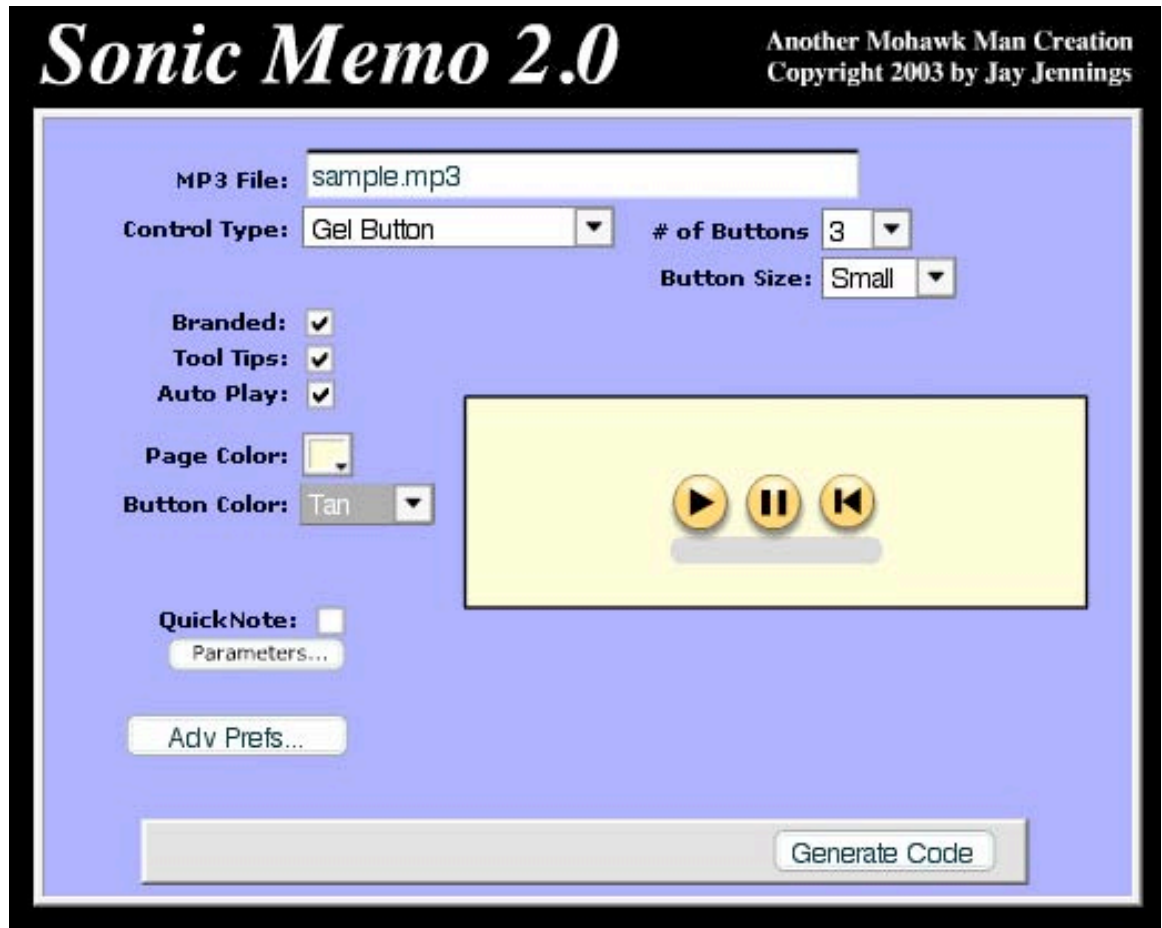
2. Once at the main screen look toward the bottom and click on the **Adv Prefs...** button (short for Advanced Preferences) to go to a new screen.



3. Make sure the screen matches the picture below, except enter **your** Sonic Memo affiliate ID in the Affiliate ID field, and then click the **OK** button:



4. You should be back at the main screen and all you have to do is fill in a blank and set a few options so the screen looks like this:



5. Now click the **Generate Code** button and copy the generated code from the text box that appears.
(Technical note: Some systems have a problem copying text from a Flash program using the options under the Edit menu. In that case, right-click (Mac users control-click) on the text, choose Select All from the pop-up menu, and then right-click (Mac users control-click) again and choose Copy.) Of course, you can always just use the Copy To Clipboard button on that screen. =:)

6. Open the file sample.html in your HTML editor and look about 30 lines from the top for this line:

`(put a Sonic Memo audio control here)`

Replace that line in the file with the code that you just copied and save the sample.html file.

7. Finally, upload that file to your web server in the same place you uploaded the mp3files, smplayers, and quicknote directories.

That's it, you're done! Surf to your server with your web browser and open that page. Your address (URL) will look something like this:

<http://yourserver.com/sample.html>

You should see the sample page in your browser and on the screen will be a control that allows you to play the audio. And since you set the "Auto Play" option in Sonic Memo, the audio file should start up as soon as the page is loaded.

That's it, you've just put audio on the web!

Now let's take a look at more of the features of Sonic Memo...

The Sonic Memo Program

A Walkthrough

Let's take a quick trip through the Sonic Memo program and look at all the options – this won't take too long because Sonic Memo was created with "quick and easy" in mind.

Splash Screen

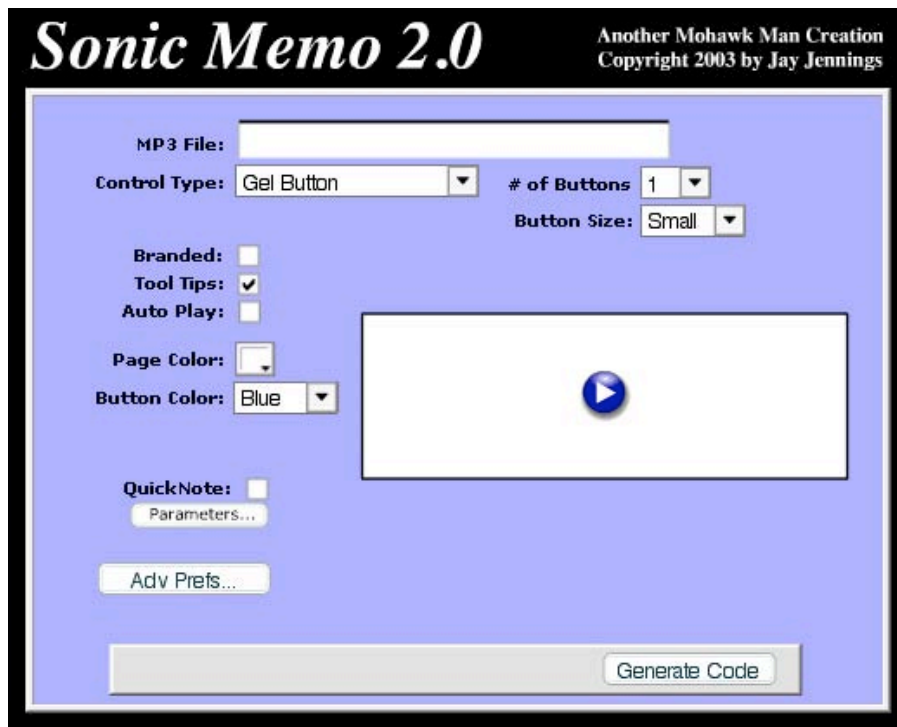
Nothing exciting here, just click the continue button to get started using the program.



Main Screen

The main screen is where you'll spend most of your time in Sonic memo. Here are the options and what you need to know about them:

MP3 File - A place for the name of an MP3 audio file – the filename should not have any slashes "/" in front or behind it and it must end with the ".mp3" suffix – it's just a normal file name. Sonic Memo isn't picky about whether you use upper or lower case, *but a lot of web servers are*. The best strategy is to **always use lowercase letters for all filenames on a web server**.



Control Type – There are three types of controls to choose from: Gel Buttons are kind of shiny (like they're made of gel) and round, Round Line Buttons are 2-dimensional buttons with a special border, and Square Buttons are, well, square. Here's what they look like:



of Buttons – You can choose audio controls with 1, 3 or 5 buttons. Here are the button combinations:

1-Button: Single button that switches between Play and Pause.

3-Buttons: Play, Pause, and Rewind buttons.

5-Buttons: Play, Pause, Rewind, skip Back a few seconds, skip Forward a few seconds.

Special feature

The 5-button control is especially good for very long sound files because it allows the listener to skip forwards and backwards (10 seconds each click) within the audio. Which means if they're 10 minutes into a 30-minute audio and have to stop, they can skip back to where they left off when they come back to it.

(When using the buttons you'll notice that all of them "rewind" to the beginning when the sound is finished playing. That way it's always ready to go again.)

Button Size – Sonic Memo Gives you two size choices – small and large (the samples above are the large size).

Branded – Check this box if you would like a "Discover Sonic Memo" link to show up under the buttons (on controls that are large enough – not single button controls and some 3-button controls). If you've filled in the Affiliate ID field in Advanced Preferences then the link will contain your affiliate ID and you could get credit for someone who clicks through and buys Sonic Memo.

Tool Tips – If this box is checked a "tool tip" will show up when the user positions the mouse cursor over the buttons. No more guessing at which button is the Play button!

Auto Play – Check this box to make the audio control start playing as soon as it's loaded. Remember that blaring audio

without giving the user some notice that it's going to happen is typically regarded as rude.

Page Color – Use the color picker to choose the color of your web page. This assures that the background of the audio control matches your web page. (You can choose web-safe colors or enter your own color code in the text field at the top of the color picker.)

Button Color – When you choose Gel or Square buttons you will only be able to choose Blue, Tan, or Red colors. If you're using Round Line buttons a color picker will appear and allow you to choose any color for the buttons.

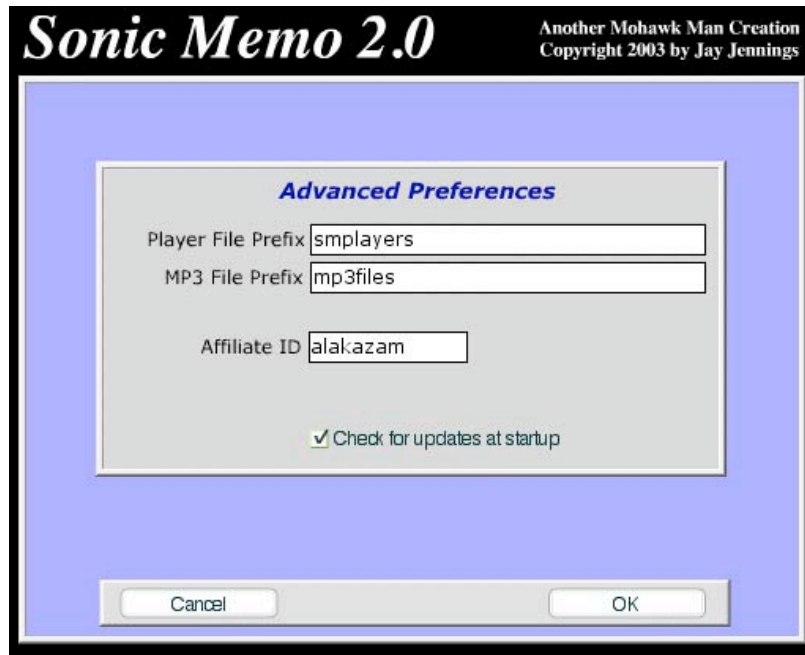
Border Color – This option only appears when you're using Round Line buttons. The border behind the buttons can be any color found in the color picker.

Note! Due to technical limitations the Round Line sample buttons shown on the screen will always be black and white but the generated code will contain the colors you choose.

QuickNote – Selecting this checkbox will cause Sonic Memo to create a complete web page instead of just code for an audio control when the Generate Code button is pressed.

Parameters – Leads to a screen where you set the parameters for the QuickNote that you want to create. See the next section for more information.

Adv Prefs – Contains settings that are usually set once and then ignored. The top two fields tell Sonic Memo where the MP3 files and the Sonic Memo players will live. As described in the tutorial, these values can be simple directory names or complete web site URLs. In fact, if all of your files live together in one directory you can leave both fields blank – although staying a little more organized is usually a good idea.



There's also a spot where you can enter your Sonic Memo affiliate ID. That way if you generate "branded" controls and someone clicks one and ends up buying Sonic Memo, you could get a commission.

The "Check for updates" box will allow Sonic Memo to check back with the mother ship to see whether there are any Sonic Memo-related updates/news that you might need to know about. The check is made only at startup.

That's your walk-through of Sonic Memo. Simple, yet very, very, effective.

Next, a look at the Sonic Memo QuickNote...


Sonic Memo QuickNote

http://www.sonicmemo.com/qn_opi_review.html

Apple News Forums Sonic Memo JayJennings Alakazam.com Programming

Sonic Memo QuickNote

Here's a 90-Second eBook Review!




"How to Profit From Other People's Information" -- The Perfect Way To Create Your Own Info Product!

The bad news is that with this product you won't have any excuses left not to have your own information product! Seriously!

[Click to read about the Other People's Info course](#)

(Note: Yes, I'm a reseller but feel I can still be unbiased. How? Because I offer a 90-day no questions money-back guarantee. You can take three months to decide whether I'm telling the truth or not. The risk is on me.)

(This is not a picture of Jay. It's a representation of someone using the info in the book Jay's reviewing.)


Discover Sonic Memo

See the [Sonic Memo site](#) for info on how using audio will create a surge in your sales!

(If you don't hear the audio, make sure you have Flash 6 installed.)


Sonic Memo QuickNote!

http://www.sonicmemo.com/qn_sample.html

Apple News Forums Sonic Memo JayJennings Alakazam.com Programming

Google AdWords Namecheap.com - Mana... Sonic Memo QuickNote!

Here's a Sonic Memo QuickNote!




Increase Your Sales With Sound Bites On Your Own Web Site - Guaranteed!

Combine the persuasive power of well-written sales copy with the emotional impact you can make with audio and you have an unbeatable combination!

See what Sonic Memo can do for you...

www.SonicMemo.com


Discover Sonic Memo

See the [Sonic Memo site](#) for info on how using audio will create a surge in your sales!

Sonic Memo QuickNote

A QuickNote is the Sonic Memo way of sending a Flash-based email. Since actually sending Flash in an email message isn't reliable, the best way to handle that is to send someone a message such as...

Ross,

Turn your speakers on and then click the link below –
I have a special QuickNote for you!

http://www.sonicmemo.com/qn_sample.html

Thanks,

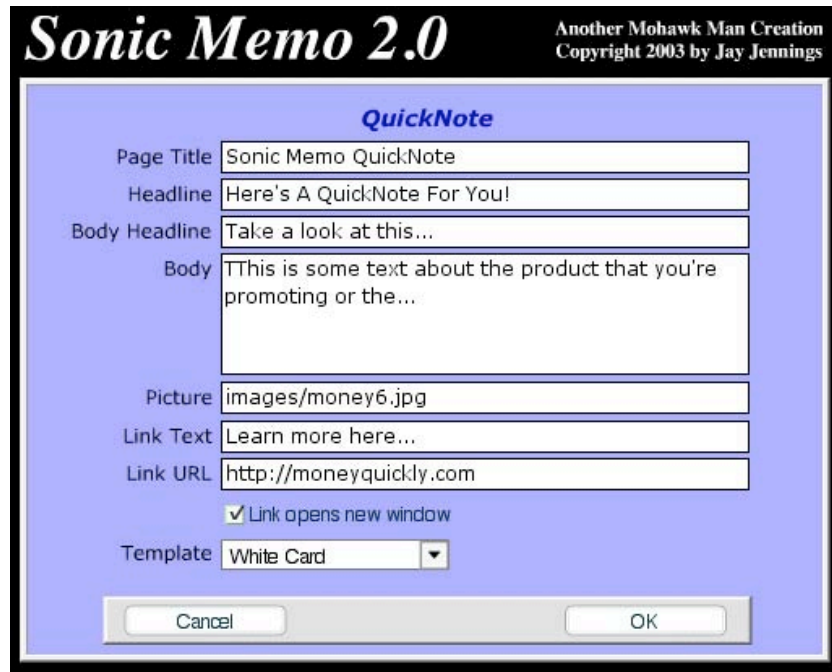
Jay Jennings

That link will lead them to a web page with your message. Go ahead and click that link right now.

Notice that the audio control on that page has been set to "auto play" which means the sound starts as soon as the page loads – no need for them to hit the Play button.

Make sure that you use "permission-based audio" by asking the user to turn on their speakers before clicking the link – this lets them know they're going to be hearing something. That's the polite thing to do, after all. =;)

Creating your own QuickNote is very easy. First, use Sonic Memo to choose the audio control you want on the page and remember to click the Autoplay checkbox. Next, click the Parameters... button under the QuickNote checkbox and you'll see the following screen:



The image shows a screenshot of the 'Sonic Memo 2.0' application window. The title bar reads 'Sonic Memo 2.0' and 'Another Mohawk Man Creation Copyright 2003 by Jay Jennings'. The main window has a light blue background and is titled 'QuickNote'. It contains several input fields: 'Page Title' with the value 'Sonic Memo QuickNote', 'Headline' with 'Here's A QuickNote For You!', 'Body Headline' with 'Take a look at this...', 'Body' with a multi-line text area containing 'This is some text about the product that you're promoting or the...', 'Picture' with 'images/money6.jpg', 'Link Text' with 'Learn more here...', and 'Link URL' with 'http://moneyquickly.com'. There is a checked checkbox for 'Link opens new window' and a 'Template' dropdown menu set to 'White Card'. At the bottom are 'Cancel' and 'OK' buttons.

Let's run through each of the parameters (most of them are fairly self-explanatory)...

Page Title – The name that shows up in the title of the web browser.

Headline – Large text that spans the width of the QuickNote. Long lines will wrap automatically, or use the
 tag to break it in specific parts.

Body Headline – Kind of a sub-head, this larger/bold text will show up just above the main body text (the next parameter).

Body – This is the main body of text to be seen on the QuickNote. If you're comfortable with HTML feel free to use tags to make words bold, italicized, etc.

Picture – Optional file name for a graphic to be shown on the left side of the QuickNote. The file name can even be a "fully qualified" URL, such as <http://server.com/mypic.jpg>

Link Text – The text that should be used to click on to go to the site specified in the Link URL parameter. This parameter (like most of them) is optional.

Link URL – The full URL (it **must** start with `http://`) of a site to go to when the Link Text (previous parameter) is clicked.

Link Opens New Window – If you check this box a new browser window will open when a person clicks the link on the QuickNote page. Otherwise the link will take them to the new page in the same window.

Template – This holds the name of the QuickNote template. There are three options that ship with Sonic Memo:

`qn-plain.html` – normal web page
`qn-tancard.html` – buff-colored sheet of paper background
`qn-whitecard.html` – white sheet of paper background

Once you have filled out the fields with your choices, click the OK button (what you've just filled in will reappear the next time you open the QuickNote screen) and then make sure the QuickNote checkbox is selected on the main screen.

Now click the Generate Code button. Right-click (Mac users can Control-click) in the text field that appears and then choose Select All from the pop-up menu. Right- or Control-click again and choose Copy from the pop-up menu.

Open Notepad or another text editor and paste the code into a blank document. You'll notice (if you know anything about HTML) that Sonic Memo has generated a complete web page. Save the file with the name of your choice in the Sonic Memo directory – make sure it ends with `".html"` because it's a web page.

Now, assuming you've already put your MP3 file in the `mp3files` folder, you're ready to test your QuickNote by

opening it in your browser. Either use File/Open... in your browser or drag the file from the Sonic Memo folder and drop it on top of a browser window.

Your page should show up and the audio should start playing automatically. If you'd like to tweak the page a little bit you can do that now in Dreamweaver or other HTML editor before uploading it to your server.

Ready for public viewing?

If you've already uploaded the smplayers folder to your server, you only have to do a couple more things before the world can be exposed to your QuickNote. Upload your MP3 file, the image file if you specified one, and the QuickNote HTML file itself.

Now all that's left is to notify people via your email message. You can use a text link such as the one shown in the example email at the beginning of this section, or you could use a graphical link.

Inside the SonicMemo/images folder is a file called qn_for_you_01.jpg that can be used in HTML emails. It looks like this:



You'll want to do some testing to see whether your customers and prospects respond better to a text link or a graphical link.

Killer eBay Descriptions

Making a talking description on eBay is just as easy. Combine these “special” steps with what you just did and you’ll have bidders listening to your voice in minutes.

1. Go into Advanced Preferences and make sure both options are set to a complete URL. For example, instead of mp3files, you’d use <http://yourserver.com/mp3files>

The reason we do this is because we can’t upload the audio files and the player files to eBay – they have to live on your server and the code just points to them. It’s much the same way you would use your own server to display a picture on eBay.

2. Fill out the main Sonic Memo screen like you did before and generate the code. Copy it and paste it into the description field on eBay where you want your audio controls to show up.
3. Preview your description and use the new audio control to listen to your message.

**There you go, your eBay auction
is now audio enhanced!**

Note! The use of Sonic Memo in eBay descriptions is not officially sanctioned by eBay, however, it’s the same technique that’s used to display extra pictures or descriptions from your own web site and so is not against their rules at this point.

Also, due to the nature of the “preview” windows used in eBay, sometimes they will accidentally delete any code after the Sonic Memo buttons. That, among others, is a good

reason to ALWAYS create your descriptions on your local computer and then copy/paste them into place on eBay. If they chomp your code, you can re-paste and run it through again. ☺

I've found that if I try to make the HTML code look nice and neat when I paste it into the eBay text field by hitting the Enter key a couple times to make space that things will often go awry.

Instead, paste your Sonic Memo code in without any extra carriage returns. For example, look at this:

Bad way to do it:

```
Click for an audio description of the item:
<p>
<object blah blah SM code here>
<p>
Payment terms are...
```

Good way to do it:

```
Click for an audio description of the item:<p><object
blah blah SM code here><p>Payment terms are...
```

I know, it's goofy and shouldn't make a difference, but it does! =;)



Recording Your Message

This is the part that can sometimes freak people out, for a couple reasons. First, they think it's a hard task to create an MP3 file. Second, when they finally hear their recording they say, "I don't sound like that!"

Yes, it would be a lovely (and strange) world if we all sounded like radio DJs, but that ain't the case. So suck it up and just do the best job you can. Or, find someone with "great pipes" and have them do your recording for you. In any case, you're going to need a microphone and some recording software.

The Mic

The good news is that if you have a newer computer you may already be completely set up and ready to go. If not, microphones can be found at CompUSA or similar computer stores for under \$50.

The one I'm using right now is a Logitech desk-based mic that cost me a grand total of about \$30 plus tax. (Yes, it looks just a tad goofy, but it works!)



If you need a microphone, head down to your local computer store and tell them what you need. Let them know it's for recording voice and they'll be able to point you to the right spot. Make sure you know whether your computer microphone input is a mini-jack or whether you need a USB mic.

Non-Microphone Options

There are times when you may want to create an audio file and a microphone isn't the solution. For example, when you're talking to someone on the phone and want to put part of the conversation online, or maybe you're offline away from your computer interviewing someone.

The way I handle this is with my handy-dandy minidisc player/recorder. For telephone work I ran down to my local Radio Shack store and bought a little box that plugs in between my handset and my phone. It has a cable coming from it that I can use to plug into my minidisc recorder and record the call.



The part number for that gizmo (the Mini Recorder Control) from Radio Shack is: 43-1237 and it retails for about \$15.

My first thought was to go straight from the phone into the Line In jack on my computer but the phone doesn't put out enough "power" to make a good recording that way so I've settled on the two-step method for now. From the phone to the minidisc recorder, then from the minidisc to the computer.

The Line In port on your sound card may work just fine, however, so give that a shot. If it works you've just saved a step in the process!

I also have a microphone that I can plug into the minidisc player and use that to capture audio for later use in the computer.

"Self Serve" Testimonials

If you'd like the ability to allow your clients to phone in a testimonial at their convenience, give them the number of your voice mail or a line at home connected to an answering

machine. They can call and leave their message whenever they like and all you have to do is call and get your messages while recording using one of the above-mentioned phone line recorders. Thanks to David Frey at <http://www.TheMarketingBible.com/> for this tip.

If you're going to implement this idea at home you could always set up a second line (maybe your fax line?) with an answering machine and use that exclusively for client recordings. (Just make sure the answering machine is the kind you can call to retrieve messages.)

Give folks the number (and maybe prod them a time or two with emails – you could set up an autoresponder to solicit testimonials) and whenever you see the little blinking light you know to fire up the recorder and grab another message from a satisfied customer!

The Software

Once you have your microphone hooked up you'll need to find some recording software. No problem – the internet is full of options, from free stuff to "for rich people only." Plus, you may already have software that will do the job on your machine. A lot of sound cards come with extra software to record/edit sounds.

For example, if you're using Windows, go to Start -> Programs -> Accessories -> Entertainment and look for a utility called Sound Recorder. It does just what it says. The only problem is that it saves the sound file as a .WAV file and we need MP3. Not to worry. You can use Sound Recorder to create your sound files and then grab a converter from the web to change it to MP3.

If you're using Macintosh and OS X, look in Applications -> Sound Studio for the Sound Studio program. It's a great utility – although again, it doesn't output to MP3. However, you can save your sound file and then import it into iTunes, which can then convert it to MP3.

Wait! This is all too complicated!

Okay, so **let's do it the easy way**. Find a program that will record from a microphone straight into MP3. I gathered up a few options and you can find links to them on the Sonic Memo web site: <http://sonicmemo.com/mp3-recorders.php>

Some of the recommendations on that page may change from time to time as good and bad reports come in about different software.

You can spend a lot of time playing around with the different options but if the first one you try allows you to quickly and easily record an MP3 file, go with it! You can always research other options later **after** your site is audio-enhanced.

If you want even more options, head to <http://download.com> and do a search for "MP3 recorder." You'll find a lot of programs you can download that will do the job.

Technical Stuff for Non-Geeks

Once you start playing with your recording software your head may start reeling with all the terms being thrown around: sampling rate, bit depth, mono vs stereo...

Don't worry, in the next few paragraphs I'm going to tell you everything you need to know – in plain English – about how to create a good sound for use in Sonic Memo on your own website.

Sonic Memo will play just about any size MP3 file, but all things being equal, smaller is better. (File size is what we're talking about here guys, stop high-fiving each other.) There are a couple things you should know in order to make your message files as small as possible while still getting the quality you want.

(Note: Some audio program give you options such as, CD Quality, FM Radio, Telephone, etc. If you have those type of options, sticking with "radio" will give you a good balance between file size and quality.)

You can record very high-quality sound, but if what you're having people listen to is spoken word messages, CD quality is probably overkill.

A good compromise are the following values:

Sampling rate: 22,050 Hz

Bit depth: 16bit – 32bit (good for dial-up users, too)

Mono (stereo's good for music but not needed for voice)

Note: You must use one of the following sample rates when creating MP3 files for use with Sonic Memo (or any other Flash-based audio player, for that matter):

11,025 Hz (or 11.025 kHz)

22,050 Hz (or 22.050 kHz)

44,100 Hz (or 44.100 kHz)

That's about all the "technical" information you need to know about recording audio. And we didn't even talk about sound waves or Nyquist's theory, or anything! ☺

Time To Take Out The Competition

Yes, I know you might have been expecting a novel-length instruction manual for Sonic Memo, but it's not necessary. You now have the knowledge to create message files and put them into your web pages to help you sell more products, connect in a different way to your prospects, or just say hi to Grandma and Grandpa in another state.

Whatever you decide to use it for, I'd like to know of your experiences with Sonic Memo. Please let me know how it's working out for you – especially if you come up with some oddball or bizarre uses for it! 😊

Now, go forth and record!



Are You Guilty of These Common Web Audio Mistakes?

Special Supplement from Paul Evans of [Audio C4](#)...

Here are the three most common web audio mistakes and tips to alleviate them...

1. **Boring:** Please tell me you don't have any of this...

- A **monotone voice** that will make some parents want to play it to their A.D.D. children at bedtime. **Tip:** Create vocal variety by thinking in terms of highs and lows. When making an exciting point let your voice rise. When making a solid point let it fall like you hear on the radio.
- **Dull wording** that falls to the carpet instead of electrifying the wallet. **Tip:** Stay in the active voice. Not – Peggy has bought my and is going to buy the next. But – Peggy bought the latest resource and plan the grab the next one the day of release.
- Using **dead words** like "Uh..." and "Um..." (That *really* makes you sound smart! Say it a lot and you'll become a genius at sales assassinations.) **Tip:** Write out a script of what you are going to say and stick to it. No "ums" in the script; no "ums" on the audio.

2. **Passionless:** Any of the following will **kill** your sales...

- Vocal energy levels that make Al Gore sound interesting. **Tip:** Record only what fills you with positive energy. Do not record just because you CAN.
- Sounding like you're giving a **lecture** on embalming. **Tip:** You can avoid sounding like a mortician by using pauses, voice inflection, and changing tempo during your messages.
- Having a "take it or leave it" **lazy attitude**. **Tip:** Fear of "selling" wrecks plenty of audios. You don't need to be pushy, but don't pull back either. Think about the way your audio will help listeners.

3. **Pathetic:** If you do these, then take your web audio down immediately...

- You **ramble** because you just "know" you're supposed to use web audio, so you just put anything up. **Tip:** Again, script yourself before every audio take. Rambling makes you sound like you don't know what you are talking about.
- Testimonials with all the **flavor of tofu**. **Tip:** Prep your testimonials. Do not let them record anything off the top of their heads. Check out what they are going to say before they say it, then give them the green light.
- A greeting that says, "Welcome to my website, the picture to the left is my cat, Simon..." **Tip:** No, there's nothing wrong with mentioning your cat if you've got a cat site, or sell pet stuff. But other than that get to the point. Don't waste time or words. Introduce yourself and tell the listeners how you are about to make their day!

For more fantastic information on making the most of your web site audio, get a copy of [Audio C4](#) – it's very HIGHLY recommended!

Ideas For Using Sonic Memo

Sure, you can put audio on your web site – but why? And where? And what should you say?

Here are some ideas that you can use as-is, or use them as “brainstorm” fodder to kickstart your creativity.

A Talking Headline: Putting an audio button right up at the top of your web page is way too inviting for most people -- they just *have* to click it. You can use that spot to tell them about some of the benefits of your product so they'll hang around and read your sales copy. Think of it as an extra headline -- with extra oomph!

Teleseminars: Record a teleseminar and then give (or sell?) access to it in a password protected area of your site. Of course, this can work for regular “off-line” seminars as well. You could distribute audio sessions on a CD or (maybe for a lower price) allow folks to listen to them online.

Audio Updates: I use Sonic Memo to do some of the updates in my private membership web site. It adds a neat touch and gives me the opportunity to actually talk to the members. Plus, sometimes I just feel like talking instead of typing.

Testimonials: Everybody knows that testimonials add credibility, and added credibility makes it easier to close a sale. Imagine your prospect actually listening to a satisfied customer -- now that's credibility!

One thing I haven't tried yet (but I'm going to!) is to call someone and get a testimonial while I'm talking to them – and then put the “raw” audio online. It'll sound like a short

one-minute interview. I think that kind of testimonial could be very compelling.

Training Tool: Some people are visual learners; some are auditory learners. Now it's simple to satisfy both. Show the process you're trying to teach in text, and then add a Sonic Memo control for those who'd rather hear about it.

Talking Product Reviews: Do you promote someone else's product as an affiliate? Sonic Memo is perfect for creating an audio review of the product. I've been creating new 90-Second Marketing Reviews that have been instrumental in pulling in more sales for the affiliate products I recommend. You can easily do the same thing!

Following are links to a couple samples:

http://sonicmemo.com/qn_opi_review.html

http://sonicmemo.com/qn_imi_review.html

Those pages are set to "auto play" so make sure your speakers are turned on before you click over to them.

Coaching and Consulting: Put your latest coaching session on your site for your members to access at their leisure. Or if you do web site or advertising critiques, post an audio version of your critique for your client.

Just Be Different: With more and more sites out there it's too easy to get lost in the shuffle. When you use Sonic Memo to create audio clips for your FAQ page, contacts, order and download pages, you'll set yourself apart from the rest of the bunch.

Of course, don't go hog-wild – not **everything** has to have an audio component. =;)

Bonus Articles Using Web Site Audio

The following articles are "semi-generic" in nature – they apply to web site audio using Sonic Memo or most other "do-it-yourself" web audio programs.

The Secret to Streaming MP3 Files That Even Dial-Up Users Can Hear

Shows how to create audio files that even folks on slow dial-up lines can listen to without stops and starts.

Using Talking Testimonials To Increase Sales

This two-part article starts off by explaining why audio testimonials are so powerful and ends with several ideas about how to get those talking testimonials on your web site.

=====

The Secret to Streaming MP3 Files That Even Dial-Up Users Can Hear

by Jay Jennings
<http://jayjennings.com>

Copyright 2003 by Jay Jennings - All Rights Reserved.

=====

Some people look at audio on a web site as a passing fad -- after all, if it was really all that useful, why did it just recently become popular?

The fact that audio can increase sales and sign-ups isn't disputed by savvy marketers, but until recently the technology wasn't cheap enough or easy enough for a "normal" person to deploy streaming audio. It used to take a special server and more fiddling than a lot of people were willing to do.

And then Macromedia Flash version 6 came on the scene and introduced the ability to stream MP3 audio files from a normal server. Soon after that several solutions came on the market that gave everyone the ability to stream audio.

So, it's all good, right? Well, not exactly. Since using audio is a new thing for most marketers there's some confusion about how to record the audio files, what size they should be, etc.

In my communications with people who are putting audio on their web sites the most common question is, "How can I create a sound file that even dial-up users can hear without lots of stops and starts?"

The stuttering that dial-up users are subjected to is a result of two factors. First, they're on a slow line and things just aren't going to come across as quickly. Second, audio files that are recorded at a high bit-rate require a high bandwidth connection. Either everyone needs DSL or better (yeah, right!) or you need to create an audio file that's much smaller in size.

So let's look at ways to do that. Note: there are about as many audio editing programs out there as stars in the sky, so the following won't be step-by-step instructions. But the info should get you close enough to make the right choices in the software you're using.

There are two options you're going to want to tweak. They're typically called "sample rate" and "bit rate." The sample rate numbers will usually be followed by the letters Hz or kHz and range from about 8000 (or 8 if the info is in kHz) to 44100 (or 44.1 kHz). Bit rate numbers are usually followed by the letters kbps and will typically range from 8 or 16 up to 196 or even higher. (If you see just two or three options, 8, 16, and possibly 32, that's not the parameter we care about).

For CD quality audio you'd want a sample rate of 44,100 Hz but since voice can get by with so much less, set your sample rate to 11,025 Hz (or 11.025 kHz). And most people listening to music want their bit rate set to at least 128 kbps, but for voice work we can go much lower. And, if we want dial-up people to be happy, we have to go very low.

Try setting your bit rate to 16kbps and see if you're satisfied with the result. If not, try 32kbps and so on, up until you are happy. Just remember, every step you take up the ladder means more dial-up people won't have a smooth audio stream. Folks with faster dial-up connections should get 32kbps sound with little trouble -- but if the sound quality of a 16kbps file floats your boat, then go with that. Just about everyone should be happy in that case.

It might take an afternoon of tweaking with your audio software to get comfortable with it the first time, but after that you'll be able to crank out audio files as easily as you crank out word processor docs.

If you haven't made the move to using audio on your web site yet, go ahead and give it a shot. There are many great reasons to use it, and now that you know how to create audio files that even dial-up users can experience, there are fewer reasons not to.

=====

Using Talking Testimonials To Increase Sales

(Part 1 of 2)

by Jay Jennings

<http://jayjennings.com>

Copyright 2003 by Jay Jennings - All Rights Reserved.

=====

When you're in the internet marketing biz, the name of the game is making sales. Okay, if you're in **any** biz that's the name of the game. But it's a different game than selling an item from a retail location, or even door-to-door.

On the internet, anyone can put up a site. You don't know whether the guy behind "Make Money In Your Socks!" is legit or whether it's a 14-year old with too little parental supervision. Folks have to trust you before they'll type their credit card numbers into the little boxes.

And that's where testimonials come in. As a way to build trust they're invaluable. You as the salesperson aren't the only one touting the advantages of your product or service - with a testimonial you have a 3rd-party also joining in.

There are a couple kinds of testimonials -- those from known gurus or people "in the biz" and those from the "man/woman on the street." With the first kind you get a "riding on his coattails" kind of effect. After all, Guru Greg has a reputation to hang on to and so isn't going to endorse a bad product (or, hopefully not).

But with the "just a regular Joe" testimonial you have the credibility from someone who's probably a lot like your prospect. They can see someone in their shoes (not in the rarified air of Guruville) with success from your product and

so it's easier for them to imagine that they will also have that success.

Including both types of testimonials on your site is best.

Now, by adding a picture of the person to the testimonial you'll increase the credibility of the testimonial because the prospect can now see the *real* person behind the words. If at all possible get a picture of the person.

And to really make the testimonial work as hard as it can, add an audio clip of the person giving a verbal endorsement of the product. Folks might think a text testimonial could be faked. If you add a picture it automatically increases the amount of trust they have toward that testimonial. And when you add audio, it boosts it up another notch.

Not only can the prospect read what someone is saying about your product, but they can see what that person looks like and even hear them at the same time.

Yowza! Talk about a trust-builder -- that's a big one right there. And with increased trust will come an increased willingness to spend their hard-earned money on the product or service you offer.

So you're convinced that adding audio testimonials to your site will help increase your sales. But how do you get the talking testimonials on the site?

There are a couple services that allow you to record your audio via a telephone call so you can ask your people who are providing the testimonial to call the number and create their message. Those services usually charge a monthly fee but they're very easy to use.

There are also audio packages available that are more of a "self service" model -- there's no monthly fee, but you also have to do a bit more work up front. As you'll soon see, if

you decide to go that route getting an audio testimonial
really isn't all that hard.

=====

Using Talking Testimonials To Increase Sales

(Part 2 of 2)

by Jay Jennings

<http://jayjennings.com>

Copyright 2003 by Jay Jennings - All Rights Reserved.

=====

In the last article I talked about the benefits of having testimonials on your site and what a boost "talking testimonials" can give you. This time I'm going to show you some ways you can get the audio from your satisfied customer's mouth onto your web site - quickly and easily.

When using a "self service" audio tool, you're responsible for getting the testimonial from the person into an MP3 file. If you're in physical contact with the person you could use a handheld MP3 recorder and go straight from voice into the correct file format. Then it's just a matter of copying the file from the recorder to your computer.

The following site is a good place to find MP3 players that will work (make sure you choose one with a line-in jack as well as a microphone): <http://reviews.cnet.com/>

Most of the time you'll be recording from the phone. Fortunately there are inexpensive gizmos from Radio Shack that will do the job pretty well. For \$15 to \$30 you can buy a device that records both sides of a phone call (stay far away from the little suction cup device).

Now that you have a way to record phone calls, you have to decide what you'll record them onto. In some cases you can go directly from the device into the line-in jack on your computer sound card. Try it and see if that works on your

system -- if so, you've got a quick and easy way to record phone calls.

You may have to go from the phone to a recorder of some type and then from the recorder to your computer. I usually record to a mini-disc unit and then after the phone call run the audio from the mini-disc into the line-in jack of the sound card. You can even use an old-fashioned device such as a cassette recorder (grin) but I like to "stay digital" for as much of the process as possible.

Okay, so the mechanical end of things is settled. But there's still the issue of recording the call. One of the best options is to call the customer and record the testimonial live. That way you can coach them in what to say and do a "retake" if the first shot isn't all that great.

If someone is a little shy about singing your praises with you listening in, you can still get audio testimonials as long as you have voice mail or an answering machine that allows you to call in for your messages.

Just make sure that the customer calls and leaves their testimonial at a time when you won't pick up the phone. They record their message on your voice mail or answering machine and then all you have to do is call in to retrieve your messages and record them with your phone gizmo.

Then copy the audio testimonial to your computer, convert to MP3, and you're all set to go.

Yes, going the "self-serve" route when doing web site audio takes a little more work, but once you have things set up, recording a new testimonial and adding it to your web site is a piece of cake and can be done in just a few minutes.

And, for some people, that little extra hassle is worth the savings they'll net by not paying for a monthly service.

Special Unadvertised Bonus

Mike Stewart, the Internet Audio Guy, has graciously allowed me to give Sonic Memo owners a “taste” of his [Front and Back Music](#) product.

FaBM allows you to add “bumper music” to the beginning and end of your audio file. For an example, listen to the audio control at the top of the Sonic Memo home page:

<http://SonicMemo.com>

Adding some music is a great way to make your audio sound professional. And with Mike Stewart’s [Front and Back Music](#) tool (available for Windows only), it’s easier than you can believe. Since I’m a Mac fanatic I can only give it a score of 4 (out of five) – but if I was a Windows user, I’d give it a FIVE and have it in my hot little hands as soon as possible. (Okay, to be honest, I do have a Windows machine, too, and that’s how I know **personally** that FaBM is way cool!)

Use the following link to download a set of two music clips that Mike has agreed you can use, royalty free, with your own audio:

<http://sonicmemo.com/fabm-bonus.php>

Since the FaBM utility isn’t included (it’s a [commercial product](#), after all), you’ll have to mix these audio files with your voice track inside audio editing software such as Cool Edit, or Audacity.

And if you want intro and outro music that you can add to your voice track by **pointing and clicking**, check out the complete [Front and Back Music](#) utility.