FluxTime clips are actually components and can be integrated into other FluxTime clips just like any other object. This is a very powerful concept, and here we'll show you how to create your own component libraries to make your work more productive.

FluxTime clips are components

The key to component libraries is, that FluxTime clips are actually components. You can display a FluxTime clip as it is, but you can also use it as a new object in any other clip! This makes it possible to reuse existing clips, and to collaborate with others by exchanging clips and building component libraries for animation projects.

Components make you more productive

Imagine you wanted to start an animation project about life in the jungle:

- Leveraging FluxTime Studio's component concept, you would start by creating different plants, fruits and animals, and storing them in a new folder called 'jungle library'.
- If you collaborate with friends, they could help you by creating their own plants, fruits and animals, and mailing these clips to you via FluxMail. You would find these clips in your Inbox, and would store them in your 'jungle library' folder.
- Once you feel you have a good selection of plants, fruits and animals, you would start creating your animation clips about life in the jungle.
- You can now use all the clips in your 'jungle library' to quickly create new settings and animation scenes: when inserting new objects, simply choose the 'File' tab, and select the component you want to use.
- To make your animation clips look more diverse, you can modify each of the inserted components by scaling and coloring them differently.

You will find, that you can create very good looking animation clips in no time at all!

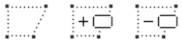
Building your own components

When building your own components, it is best to start with a blank new clip:

Click on the 'New Clip' button, and then click on the 'Blank' tab. Choose a suitable size for the new component clip and click OK. The size of the new component clip is not too important at this point, because you can scale it to any size when you insert it. If you are not sure about the size, just create a square 100 x 100 blank clip.

Click on 'Insert Object' in the toolbar to insert the objects you need to build your component. You can really work with anything you like here, simple shapes, text, or even other components. In most cases you will want to use simple shapes to build something new. Insert as many objects as you need, and set their color using the color sliders.

Use the Move, Scale and Rotate tools to change the size and position of then objects you are using. We'll group these objects later to fix them in relation to each other.

 Use the Shape Edit tools to modify and create new shapes. This will probably be the main tools you are using when creating new components, because they allow you to create completely new shapes and forms with a unique character.

After you have created, colorized and positioned all shapes of your new component, you should use the grouping tools to group them together. This step fixes their size and position in relation to each other, and makes it possible to treat them as a whole.

Finally, click on the 'Save Clip' button to save the new component clip. It makes sense to save all components in a special library folder, so that you can later find them more easily. If this is your first component clip, you should create a new library folder: In the 'Save Clip' dialog window, click on 'Organize Clips'. A new dialog window pops up, and here you can click on 'Create Folder' and specify a folder name, e.g. 'Library1', to create your new library folder. Click 'OK' when you have created the new folder. Back in the 'Save Clip' dialog, choose the new library folder on the left, and enter the name of your new component on the right. Click 'OK' to save the clip.

Congratulations, you have just created your first component library!

You can now create more component clips, and add them to your library folder. You can also ask friends if they already have suitable components for your library, or if they can help you creating new ones. They can send you components via FluxMail, and you can open them from your Inbox and store them in your library folder.

Using your own component library

Using your own components is really very simple and straightforward:

First click on 'New Clip' to create a new clip. If you want to start from scratch, choose the 'Blank' tab to create a blank new clip and populate it with your components. If your component library contains some ready-made backgrounds, choose 'File' and then navigate to your library folder, to choose the background you want to use as a template.

Click on 'Insert Object' in the toolbar, and choose the 'File' tab. Navigate to your library folder and choose the component you want to insert. Click 'OK' and then draw up the new component on the canvas. Repeat this step for every component you want to insert.

Finally

When you start creating and using component libraries, you will notice very soon that it enhances your productivity dramatically. The initial effort to create component libraries is very quickly compensated for when you reuse your components over and over again.

Also, component libraries are not static. You can modify or delete existing components, or add new components any time. Component libraries can grow with your animation projects, and you can have many different component libraries for different kinds of objects.

Using components and organizing them in component libraries just makes your life easier. Don't forget that you can exchange components with friends via FluxMail. This is key to collaborating with others and building up component libraries quickly.

We hope you have fun and enjoy using components in FluxTime Studio.

The FluxTime Team.