

# **Using Strange Cranium's MainBrain v2.3.1**

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Revision 3 - 08 June 2013**

## **\_What It Is**

**MainBrain** is a Max For Live device from Strange Cranium that provides ways to trigger scenes in Ableton Live, cue events when scenes are triggered, and groups adjacent scenes in a large session into 'songs'. This functionality is achieved through scene naming conventions and hardwired MIDI controller assignments.

## **\_Software Requirements**

The current version, **MainBrain v2.3.1**, has been approved to work with both Mac OS 10.6.8 (aka "Snow Leopard") and 10.7.3 ("Lion"). MainBrain is made to work with **Ableton Live 8.3** and was created with **Max 6.0.4**.

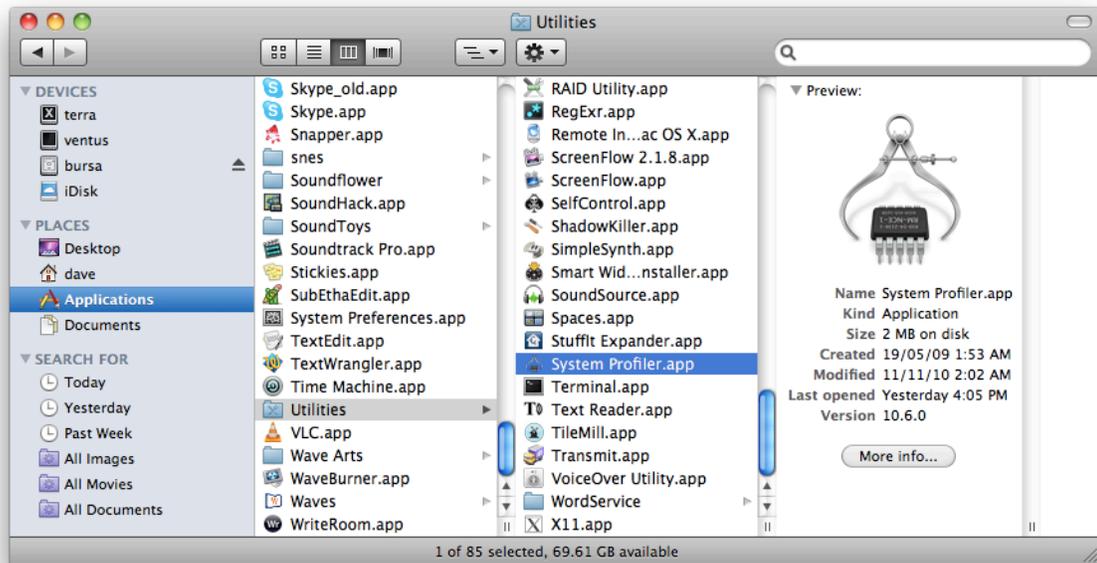
*[Please note that while you must install Max to use Max For Live, Max For Live does not require a license for Max itself. See [Ableton's website](#) for more details, including [installation instructions](#) (see question 6).]*

## **\_Requesting an Authorization**

MainBrain requires an authorization code (authcode) to run. Authcodes are specific to each computer you purchase a license for. For us to get you a proper authcode, we need a system report from each computer you are authorizing. Below are instructions for generating this report.

If you are on Mac OS 10.6.x ("Snow Leopard"):

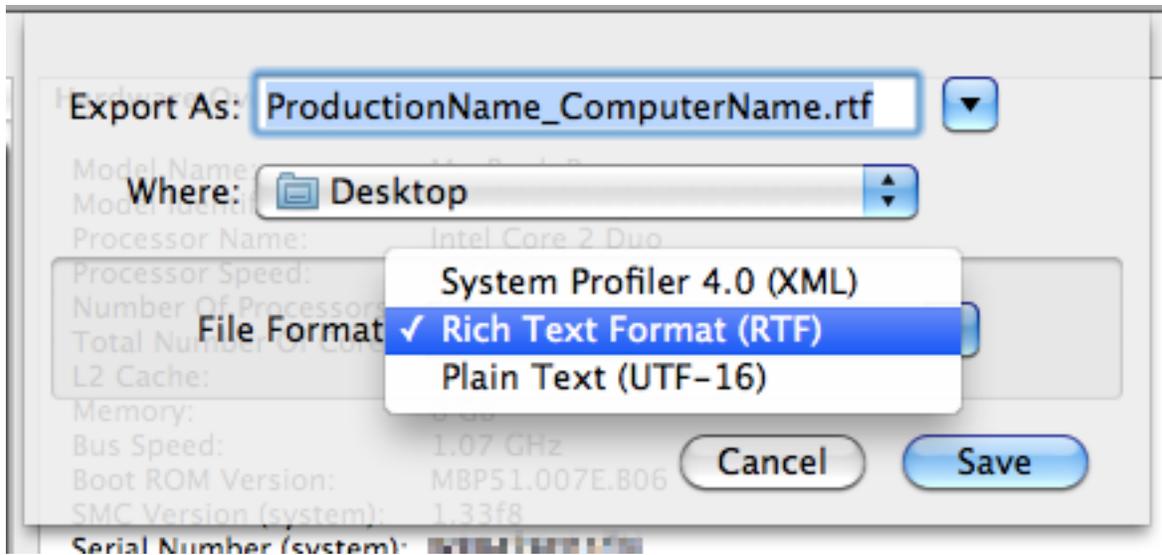
1. Open the **System Profiler** application. This program is located in your **Applications** folder, inside the **Utilities** folder:



2. From the **View** menu, select the option **Basic Details**:



3. From the File menu, select **Save As....** In the standard save dialog that appears, set the **File Format** to **Rich Text Format (RTF)**:



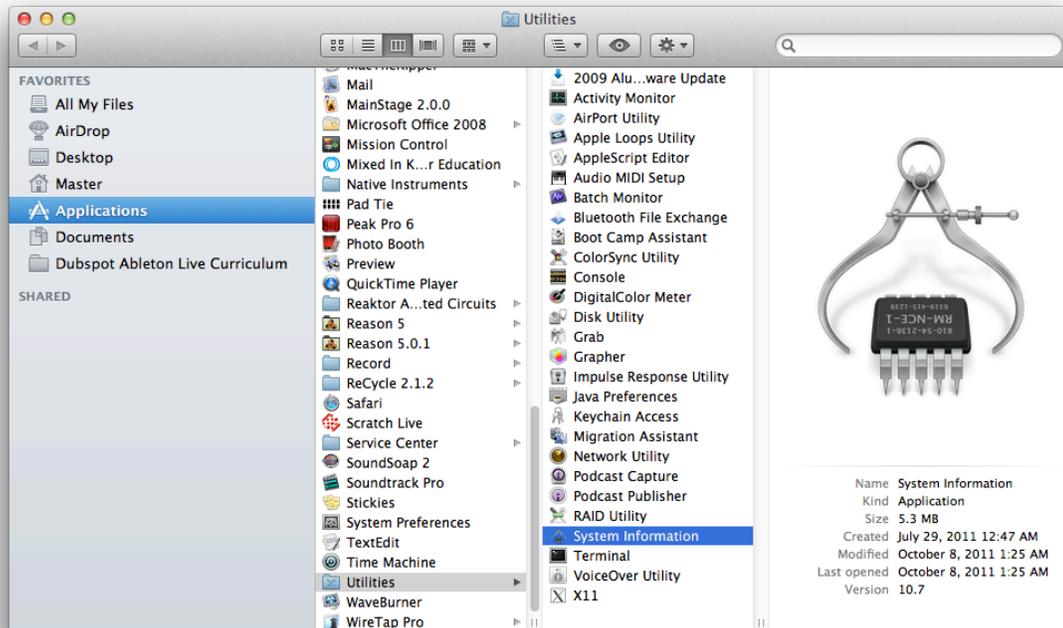
Name the file *ProductionName\_ComputerName.rtf*. For example:

U2\_laptop3.rtf  
LesMis\_tower2.rtf

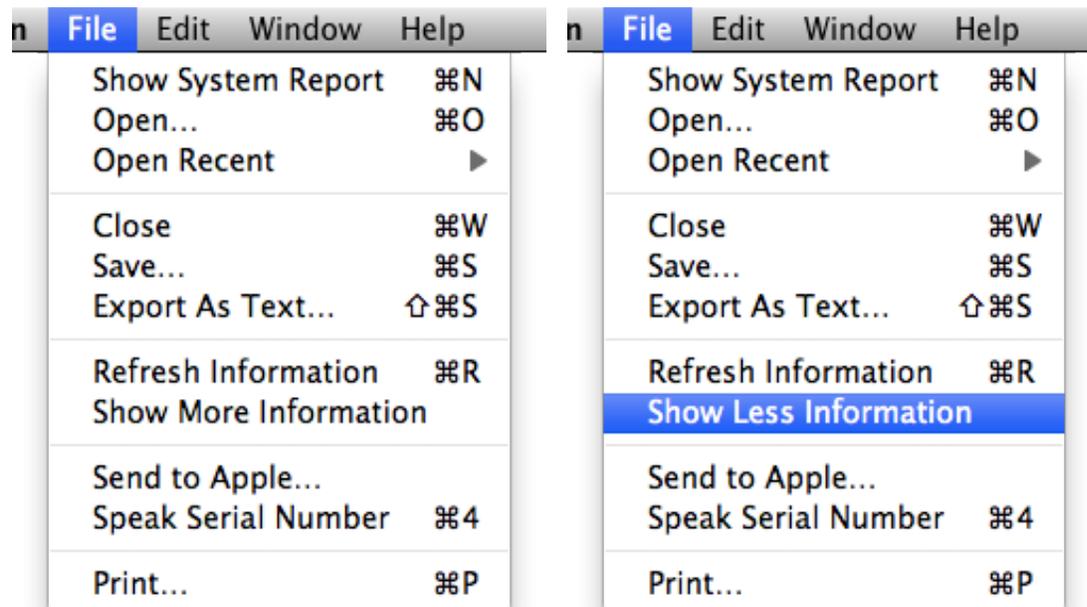
4. Email this file to [strangecranium@mac.com](mailto:strangecranium@mac.com), and we will respond with an authcode.

If you are on Mac OS 10.7.x ("Lion") or 10.8.x ("Mountain Lion"):

1. Open the **System Information** application. This program is located in your **Applications** folder, inside the **Utilities** folder.



2. Under the **File** menu, one of the option will be called either **Show More Information** or **Show Less Information**:



*YAY! Skip to the next step.*

*BOO! Select Show Less Information.*

- a. If you see the option **Show More Information**, then you are all set. Skip to the next step.
  - b. If you see the option **Show Less Information**, select this option, and then proceed to the next step.
3. From the File menu, select **Save As....** In the standard save dialog that appears, set the **File Format to Rich Text Format (RTF)**, and name the file *ProductionName\_ComputerName.rtf*. For example:

```
U2_laptop3.rtf
LesMis_tower2.rtf
```

4. Email this file to [strangeanium@mac.com](mailto:strangeanium@mac.com), and we will respond with an authcode.

## **Scene Naming Conventions**

Scenes can be named and renamed freely in Ableton Live. MainBrain scans these names, looking for specially formatted words that instruct the program to function in the following ways.

**Song Header.** A single, unaccompanied capital letter s (S) within a scene's name treats that scene as the start point of a new song. Example scene names that would have this effect:

```
S Somewhere Over the Rainbow
shaft S
WHAT A S LOUSY SONG TITLE
```

*[All of the following functions work similarly, with the position of any formatted words being unimportant.]*

**Stop Playback & Advance.** Triggering a scene whose name contains the fully capitalized word TACIT will cause Live's transport to stop and will then shift focus to the next scene.

**Scene Duration in Bars.** A word that ends with a capital B and is preceded by a number will play for exactly that number of bars. For example, a scene name containing the word 8B will play for 8 bars and then trigger the next next scene.

**Scene Duration in Clicks.** A word that ends with a capital C and is preceded by a number will play for exactly that number of clicks/beats. For example, a scene name containing the word 5C will play for 5 beats in Live's current meter and then trigger the next next scene.

**Clip Global Quantization Setting.** Triggering a scene whose name contains a word ending with Q that is preceded by certain numbers will change Live's global quantization setting. The following words change the global quantization to the specified value:

0Q = none (no launch quantization)  
1Q = one bar  
2Q = one half note  
4Q = one quarter note  
8Q = one eighth note  
16Q = one sixteenth note  
32Q = one thirty-second note

For bar values, a BQ is used:

1BQ = one bar (same as using 1Q)  
2BQ = two bars  
4BQ = four bars  
8BQ = eight bars

For triplet values, a TQ is used:

2TQ = one triplet half note  
4TQ = one triplet quarter note  
8TQ = one triplet eighth note  
16TQ = one triplet sixteenth note

**Metronome Toggle.** Triggering a scene whose name contains a word ending with METRO can enable or disable Live's metronome click. There are two proper uses:

1METRO = enables Live's click  
0METRO (that's zero + METRO) = disables Live's click

**Program Change Message.** A word that ends with a capital PG and starts with a number will transmit that program change message to the MIDI destination of the MainBrain track. For example, a scene containing the word 42PG would transmit a program change message of value 42 (or 41, depending on how your device is counting).