

PowerCinema 6 By Bart Koslow

Cyberlink PowerCinema 6 is a multimedia program to play, record, and classify Photos, Movies, Videos, Music and TV programs.

Opening the program you see a funky menu system that consists of a circular menu system with icons representing Memories, Entertainment, Settings, and Internet Services. Off to the right for each of these selections is a rather small, hardly readable sub-menu section which only becomes readable after you select it. The two primary program parts are under Entertainment and Memories.

Selecting the Entertainment Icon, on the right side of the screen you see selections for Recorded TV, Program Guide, Radio, Music, Recent Music, Movies, and Live TV. When you select one of these items, a barely discernable, tiny and practically unreadable sub-menu appears on the right side of the screen. In almost every case, the only way I could figure out what they were was to click on what appeared to be items on the sub-menus. I selected each in turn and quickly found out that you require a TV tuner or Radio tuner to use each of these items except for Music and Movies.

I selected Movies after placing a DVD in my DVD drive. After blindly clicking on the unreadable submenu I was able to select the DVD in my DVD drive and a typical movie player screen appeared. I was then able to play the disk. Next, I went to Music, selected (this somewhat readable) Browse By from the sub-menu, and one song from my Music folder popped up (this time readable) and I was able to play it. I went back and again selected Browse By and finally with difficulty was able to bring up a group of other selections from my Music folder, but was unable to play any of them even when I selected Play.

Moving on the Memories Icon, there were selections on the right side of the screen for Photos, Recent Photos, My Videos and Recent Videos. I have plenty of photos on my hard disks, so I went to Photos and on the right side of the screen saw the usual mostly unreadable sub-menu. There were two headings that were barely discernable. I selected Browse by Folder. A large number of folders and drives popped up on the screen and they were easily readable. I was able to go to any and all of the photo folders on my drives. When I brought up some pictures, I was able to zoom in, edit them, and place them in slide shows. I did not have any Videos on my hard drives so I was unable to test that part of the program.

I was extremely disappointed with this program. First, it had the worst menu system I have ever seen. Even if I could have read the menus on my 22" LCD monitor, they still would be non-intuitive and difficult to use. This vendor in trying to be different and avant garde makes it much more complicated to use this program than if they had used the standard Microsoft menu structure that almost

every other program uses. On top of that I had difficulty getting parts of the program to work. All in all, I think this program needs extensive rework to make it acceptable.

The website for this program is at www.cyberlink.com