

Lyrics in the Regions (Ken Walden)

Ken Walden was the product specialist for Digidesign for seven years. He had a bird's-eye view of Pro Tools during its greatest era of expansion, and he now runs a company called Secrets of the Pros, producing DVDs that showcase some of the best tips he's culled over the years. He shared with me one of his favorite little-known nuggets of wisdom for music sessions in Pro Tools—lyrics tracks.

Unfortunately, there is no method of adding lyrics to a Pro Tools session to keep track of where each vocal line exists. However, here are some cool techniques for creating your own lyric sheets within the song.

Version 1

1. Section the main Vocal track into regions matching certain lines or phrases.
2. Name each region with the lyric of the section or a phrase that tells you what is being sung, as shown in Figure 4.49.

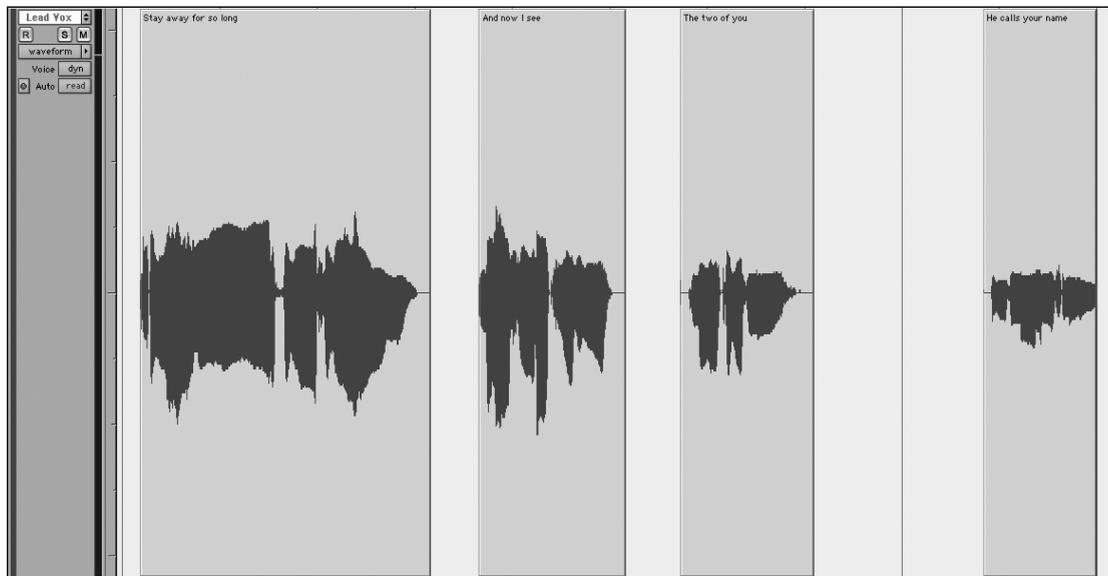


Figure 4.49

Lyrics named onto the regions of the lead vocal

Version 2

1. Create an Audio track either above or below the main Vocal track.
2. Listen to the vocals and create regions on the Lead Vocal track in a fashion that works for the song, either line by line or section by section.

3. Select the region corresponding to the first phrase, and move the selection down (or up) to the new Audio track.
4. Hold SHIFT+OPTION+3 (consolidate selection) to create regions of empty space that match the regions created on the Lead Vocal track.
5. Name the empty region with the lyrics of the section, as shown in Figure 4.50.
6. Repeat throughout the song.
7. Choose Edit > Heal Separation while highlighting the original Lead Vocal track to reconnect the regions if desired.

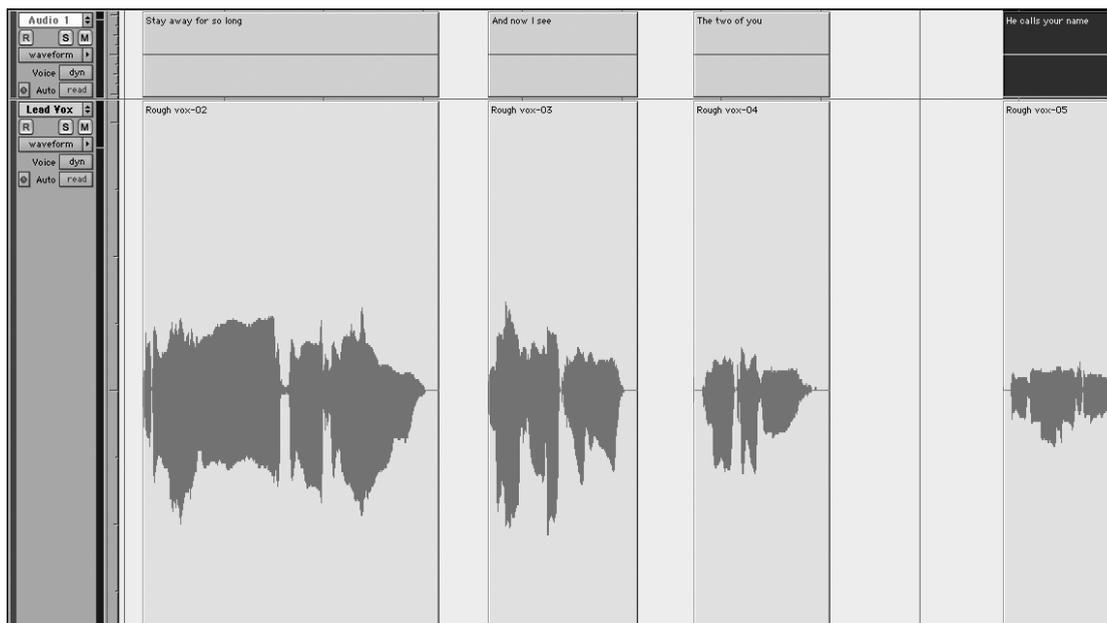


Figure 4.50

Lyrics named on empty spaces above the Lead Vocal track

Version 3

1. Create a new MIDI track either above or below the main Vocal track.
2. Listen to the vocals and create regions in a fashion that works for the song, either line by line or section by section.
3. Select the region corresponding to the first phrase, and move the selection down (or up) to the new Audio track.
4. View the track as notes and pencil-draw a single note for the length of this selection.

5. Switch the track to Regions view. You should see regions that match the lyric regions from your main Vocal track.
6. Name the empty region with the lyrics of the selection, as shown in Figure 4.51.
7. Repeat throughout the song.

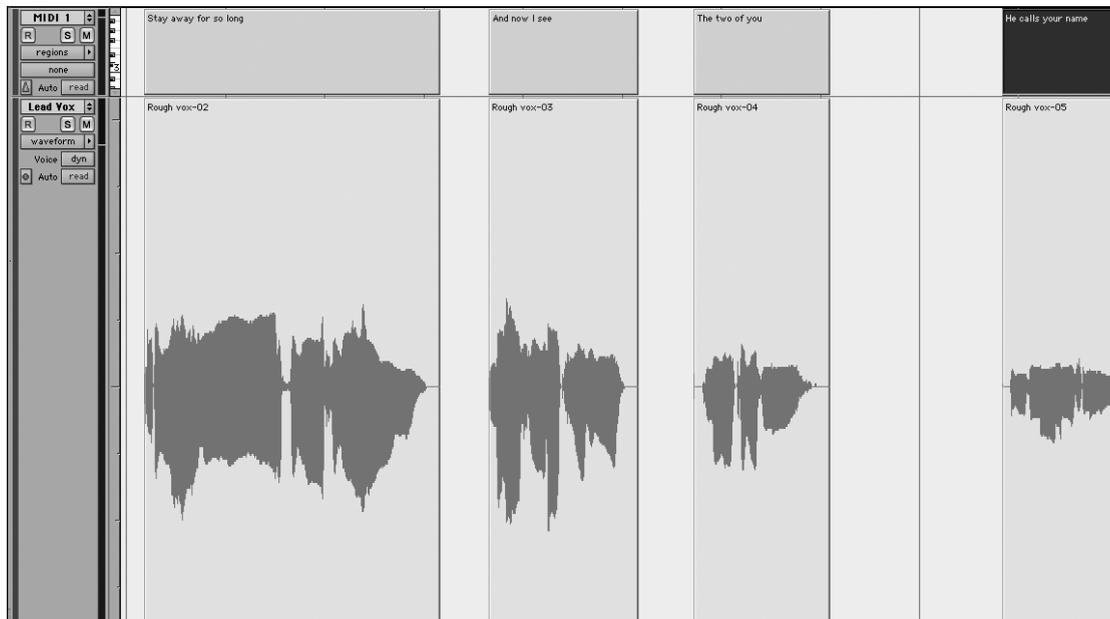


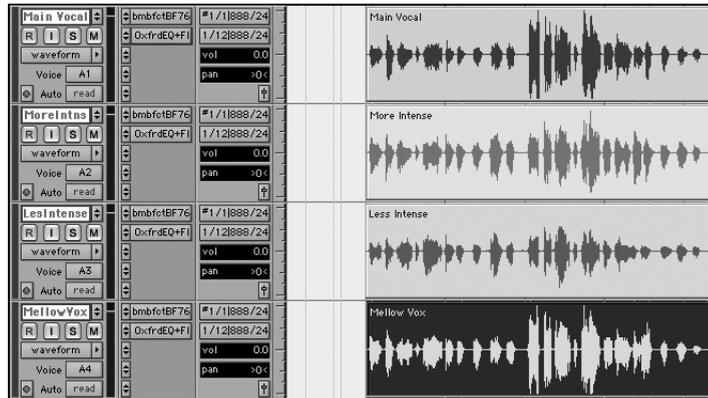
Figure 4.51

MIDI track with lyrics in the regions

Switching between Multiple Takes

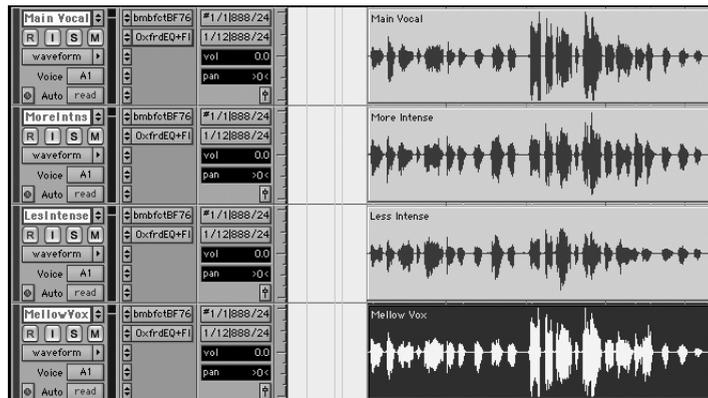
The take is done and it's perfect, but now your artist wants to redo it in three new ways. This is standard operating procedure for most vocalists. Following are a few ways to handle the request without going crazy.

1. Create three or more new Audio tracks, and mute the ones that you are *not* working with. You should name them Intense Vocal or Softer Vocal to match the style of delivery, as seen in Figure 4.52. This will use three other voices as well, which might be a problem if you are close to or at your voice limitation. You can immediately switch between takes by muting and unmuting the tracks you want to switch from and to, respectively. You also will need to recreate any inserts and sends to match the tone between takes, which might be overly taxing for your processor.

**Figure 4.52**

Four tracks with four setups and voices

- Follow Step 1, but set all four tracks to the same voice, as in Figure 4.53. That way, you can keep your voice usage to a single voice. Select the Mute Frees Assigned Voice option (HD only; shown in Figure 4.54) to switch between the four tracks quickly. (If this option isn't available, you will need to choose the Track > Make Inactive option, shown in Figure 4.55, to hear the next track.) When you mute one track, its voice is freed for use by the next track in priority (the one directly below it). There might be a delay in switching, so you might want to stop playback before switching. You will need to recreate any inserts and sends to match the tone between takes, which might be overly taxing for your processor as well.

**Figure 4.53**

Four tracks with the same voices

- Create a separate playlist for each take by clicking on the Playlist tab, just to the right of the Channel Select. Name each playlist Vocal Soft or Vocal Intense so that when PT shortens the name, it still starts with VOC. You can switch between tracks by switching playlists, as shown in Figure 4.56, but you might also experience a slight delay in switching. You should stop playback before switching to avoid this. However, all playlists will retain the insert chain and send chain so they sound the same without using up extra processing.



Figure 4.54
The Options > Mute Frees Assigned Voice option



Figure 4.55
The Track > Make Inactive option



Figure 4.56
List of vocal playlists