

Chapter 1

Getting to Know Premiere Pro

In This Chapter

- ▶ Getting a look at Adobe Premiere Pro
- ▶ Taking the Grand Tour

The field of video-editing software is getting pretty crowded these days. Premiere Pro is now just one of many pro-caliber editing programs in the \$500-to-\$1000 price range, a field now populated with such offerings as Apple Final Cut Pro (for the Macintosh only), Avid Xpress DV, Pinnacle Edition, and Sonic Vegas. Adobe Premiere now has more than ten years of experience in the realm of PC-based video editing—but to be honest, it has been upstaged by some of its rivals in recent years. Thankfully, the newest version of Premiere Pro answers questions that almost everyone was asking, bringing it once again to the forefront of the video-editing scene.

This chapter introduces you to Adobe Premiere Pro by showing you what this program is designed to do and what it has to offer. You also get a tour of Premiere Pro to help you find your way around this feature-packed program.

What Is Adobe Premiere Pro?

Adobe Premiere Pro is, first and foremost, a video-editing program — although that term is almost too modest, given the versatility of Premiere Pro. Editing movies on affordable PCs has been a dream since multimedia-ready computers became common in the mid-1990s. For years, the *reality* of affordable video editing lagged well behind the dream. But today, video can be easily edited on computers that cost less than \$1,000, and powerful programs like Premiere Pro give you editing tools that were previously available only to video and film professionals, working on systems that cost hundreds of thousands — if not millions — of dollars. With Adobe Premiere Pro, you can skip the glitz and get right to the gist:

- ✓ Capture audio and video from your camcorder or video deck (if your computer has the right hardware).
- ✓ Pick and choose scenes to include in a movie. You can move frame by frame through video to precisely place your edits.

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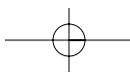
- ✔ Make use of up to 99 separate video tracks that can be composited and combined to make a single image.
- ✔ Add and edit audio soundtracks to your program. Up to 99 separate audio tracks can be added to the program.
- ✔ Create titles and add still graphics to your movie projects. Titles and graphics can be animated in a variety of ways.
- ✔ Apply one of 73 different transitions to video. Transitions can be used in any video track.
- ✔ Modify your movie with 94 video and 22 audio effects.
- ✔ Improve and adjust color using an advanced new Color Corrector.
- ✔ Use powerful new audio tools to mix audio, whether it's mono, stereo, or 5.1 channel surround.
- ✔ Work more flexibly than ever with multiple, nestable timelines.
- ✔ Preview edits immediately in real time, without having to wait for rendering.
- ✔ Record movies to videotape at full broadcast quality.
- ✔ Export tightly compressed movies for the World Wide Web in RealMedia, QuickTime, Windows Media, or one of many other available formats.
- ✔ Output movies directly to DVD.

Even these hefty capabilities are only a smattering of what you can do with Adobe Premiere Pro. It's one of the most versatile programs you'll ever use.

Where's the Mac?

Previous versions of Adobe Premiere (version 6.5 and earlier) were available for both Macintosh and Windows computers. Adobe's announcement that Premiere Pro (technically version 7 of Premiere) would run only in Windows XP was met with some shock and surprise, especially considering that only a few years ago, Adobe was considered a very Mac-oriented software company. Exactly why Adobe chose not to develop a Mac OS X-compatible version of Premiere Pro is a subject that will probably forever remain a mystery to those of us who aren't part of the inner circles at Adobe.

If you have a Macintosh, you might be considering running Premiere Pro on your Mac using a program that emulates the Windows operating system. I do not recommend this work-around: As I describe in Chapter 2, Premiere Pro relies heavily on a technology called *SSE* — a set of multimedia instructions only found in the latest computer processor chips from AMD and Intel. If those exact instructions are not present, Premiere Pro will crash hard and crash often — and as of this writing, no Apple processors include the SSE instruction set.



Taking the Grand Tour

As you might expect from a program that can do so many things, the Adobe Premiere Pro program interface may seem complex and intimidating the first time you look at it. When you launch Premiere Pro, you see a welcome screen that looks like Figure 1-1. The area under Recent Projects gives you quick access to any projects you've been working on recently. (If this is the first time you've launched Premiere Pro, you probably won't have anything listed under Recent Projects.)



Figure 1-1:
Welcome to
Premiere
Pro!

If you don't have a previous project to open and continue work on, you have to start a new project if you want to see Premiere Pro in action. Click the New Project button in the welcome screen to open the New Project dialog box (as shown in Figure 1-2). This dialog box is a little complicated because you have to actually make a decision about what kind of project you want to create. This is where you choose a *preset* — a standard collection of settings that apply to a certain kind of video or medium.

Which preset you choose depends on the video you're working with; preset settings are specific to frame size, frame rate, audio quality, and the video broadcast standard for your area. For example, if you live in North America and will be editing video you recorded with your digital camcorder, you'll probably choose DV-NTSC Standard 48kHz. If you aren't sure what to choose, click Standard 48kHz (under either DV-NTSC or DV-PAL), type a name for your project in the Name field, and then click OK. (For more on choosing presets, turn to Chapter 5.)

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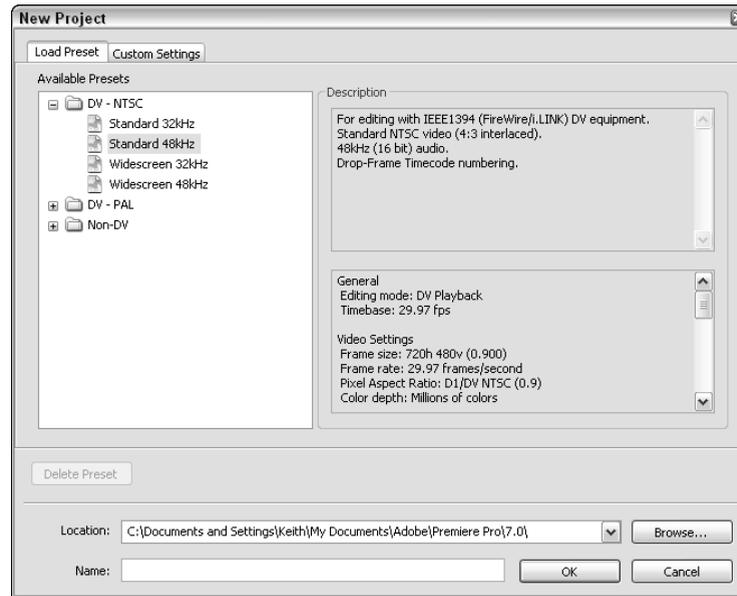


Figure 1-2: This dialog box helps you start a new project in Premiere Pro.

When you have chosen a project preset, Premiere Pro opens (at last) to the editing workspace. The exact appearance of your workspace depends upon the current screen resolution setting on your computer, but the basic appearance should resemble Figure 1-3. Although the *exact* appearance varies, you still see at least the three fundamental windows that make up the Premiere Pro interface — the Project window, the Monitor, and the Timeline, as shown in Figure 1-3. These three windows are explained in greater detail in the following sections.

Project window

Think of the Project window as a sort of filing cabinet that helps you organize the various files and clips you use in your project. Whenever you capture video from your camcorder or video deck, import still graphics, or capture audio from an audio CD, the files show up in the Project window. If you're working on a big project, you'll end up with many different files in this window; a full project window looks similar to Figure 1-4. You can create new bins in the Project window to help organize your files. Bins work like folders in your operating system. To create a new bin, follow these steps:

1. Click in the Project window to select it and make it active.
2. From the menu bar at the top of the Premiere Pro screen, choose **File** → **New** → **Bin**.

A new bin appears in the Project window with the name highlighted.

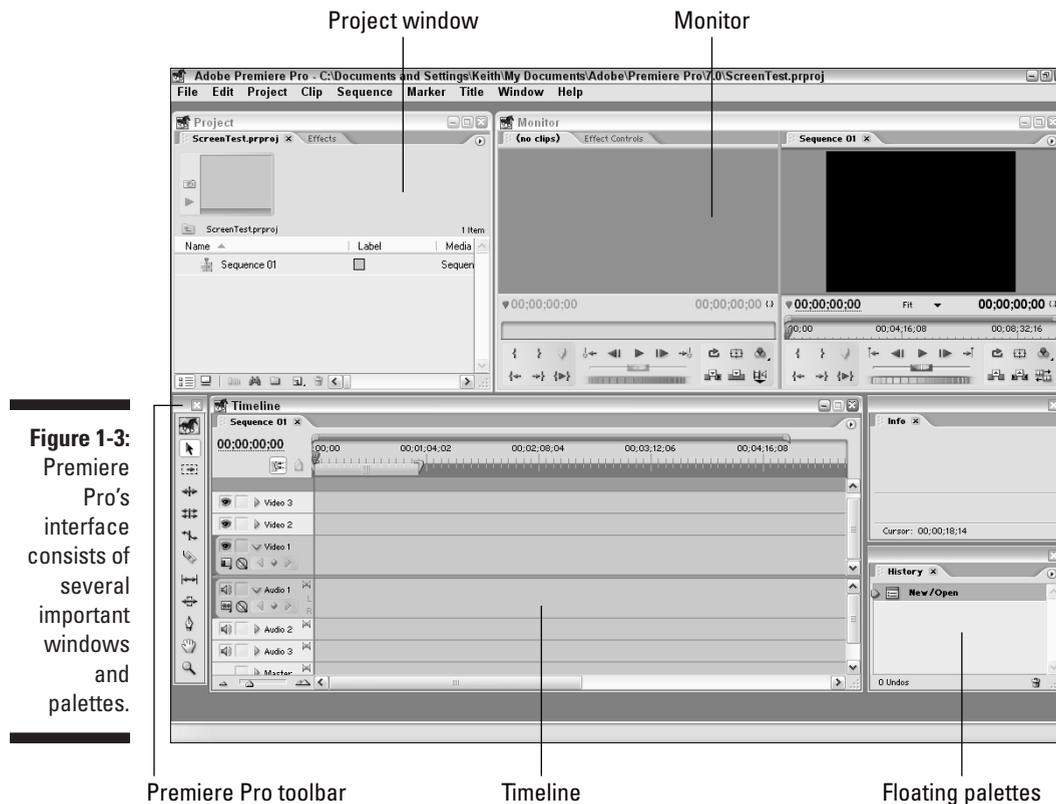


Figure 1-3:
Premiere Pro's interface consists of several important windows and palettes.

3. Type a name for your new bin and press Enter.

Your new bin now appears in the Project window. Click the bin to view its contents. To add items to a bin, simply click-and-drag them into the bin elsewhere in the Project window. Figure 1-4 shows a Project window for a project I'm working on; as you can see, I've imported and captured a lot of files into it.

Although the Project window is primarily a storage place, you can also use it to

- ✔ **Review data about a file.** What's the frame size of the image? Is the file an audio clip, video, or a still graphic? How long is the clip? Columns in the Project window provide many different kinds of information about your files.
- ✔ **Preview the file.** If you click a file in the Project window, a preview of it appears in the upper-left corner of the Project window (as shown in Figure 1-4). If you click the little Play button under the preview, you can play audio and video clips to get a better idea of what's in them.

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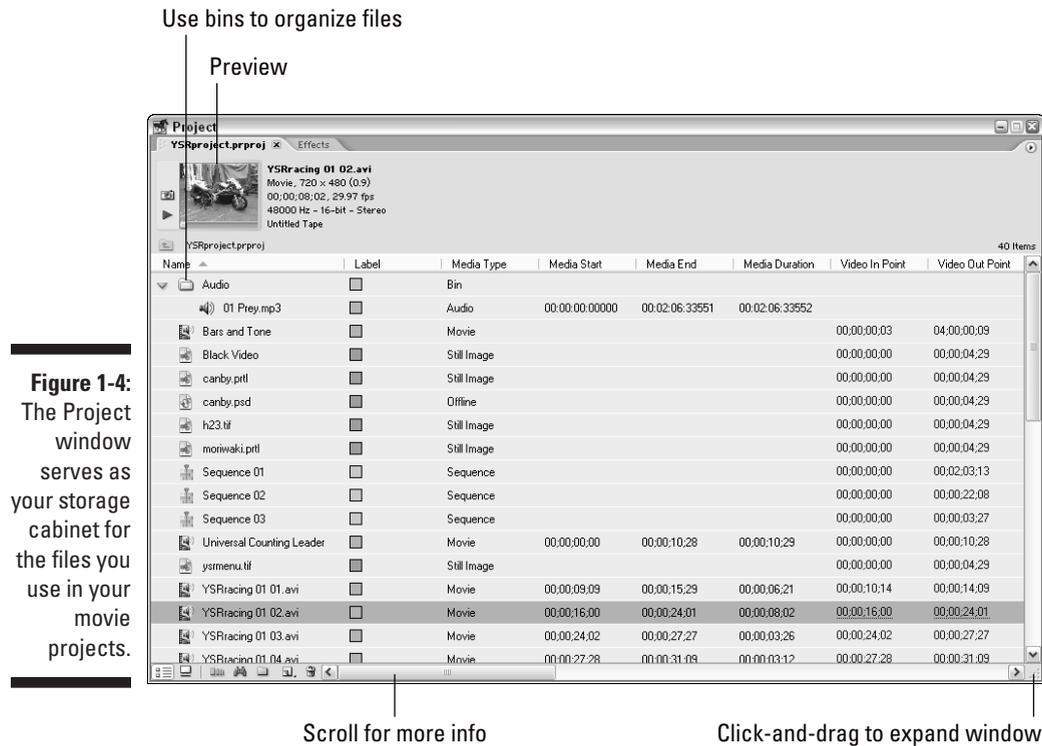


Figure 1-4: The Project window serves as your storage cabinet for the files you use in your movie projects.

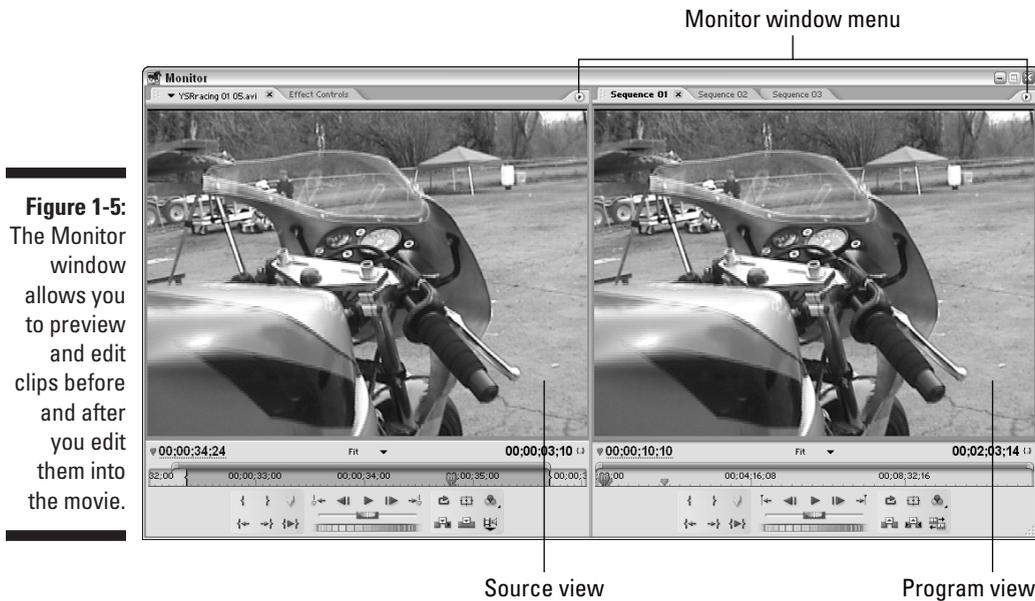
Monitor

Try to imagine editing video without being able to look at it. Your task would be daunting. Thankfully, Premiere Pro makes sure you can always see exactly what your movie looks like as you work on it. The Monitor window is where you view your work. The Monitor window has controls for playing video and audio clips and for performing other editing tasks. In the Monitor, you

- ✓ Play through clips you plan to add to a movie project. As you play each clip, you decide which portions to add to the movie by setting *In points* and *Out points*. When you set In and Out points, only the portions of the clip between those two points will be added to your movie program.
- ✓ Play through the edits you have already made in your project.

The Monitor shown in Figure 1-5 has two panes. The left pane is called the Source view, and this is where you review clips before you edit them into the movie. To load a video file into the Source view, simply drag the file from the Project window and drop it on the Source view side of the Monitor.

The right pane of the Monitor is the Program view, which shows what's in the actual movie project you're assembling in the Timeline (a feature described in the next section).



If you're trying to conserve screen space, you can switch the Monitor to a single pane view if you wish. To do so, click one of the Monitor window menu buttons (as shown in Figure 1-5, it looks like a tiny little right-pointing arrow) and choose Single View from the menu that appears. If you choose Single View from the Source side of the Monitor, the Monitor will switch to a single pane showing only the source clip. If you choose Single View from the Program side, the single pane displayed is your video program as currently edited.

Timeline

The Timeline could be considered the heart and soul of Adobe Premiere Pro. As with virtually every other video-editing program, Premiere Pro's Timeline is the place where you craft your movie by putting its pieces in the desired order. You assemble clips, add effects, composite multiple clips on top of each other, and add sound. As you can see in Figure 1-6, the Timeline shows audio tracks on the bottom and video tracks on top. You can have up to 99 video tracks and 99 audio tracks in the Premiere Timeline. A new feature in

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Premiere Pro is the possibility of multiple *sequences* in the Timeline. Sequences appear as tabs in the Timeline window. Each sequence functions like its own separate Timeline, which you can work on by itself. Sequences can be combined (or *nested* in the official terminology of Premiere Pro) or used separately.

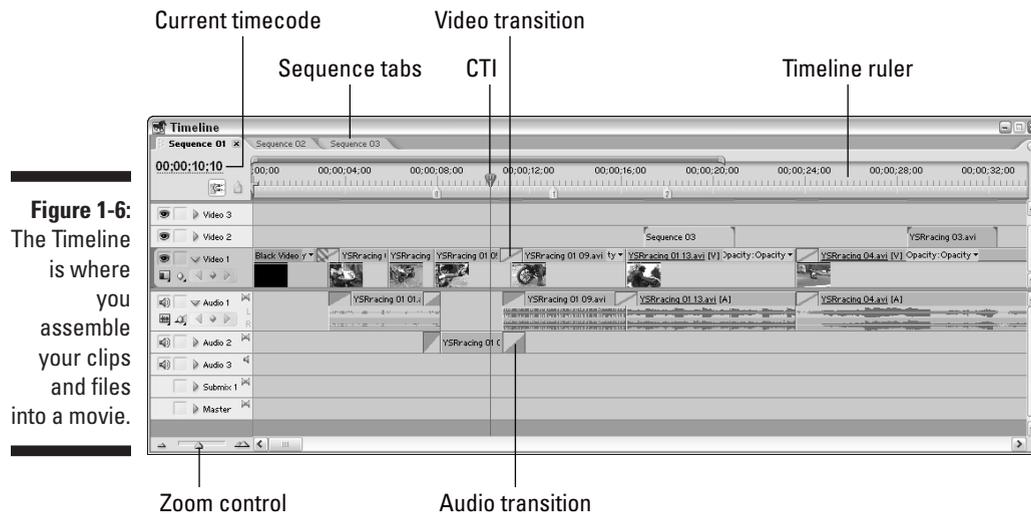


Figure 1-6: The Timeline is where you assemble your clips and files into a movie.

I can't completely explain the Timeline here. That would fill a chapter all by itself. (In fact, it does — Chapter 8.) However, I do want you to know that by using the Timeline, you can

- ✔ Expand the view of a track by clicking the right-facing arrow on the left side of the Timeline.
- ✔ Figure out where you are in the project by using the Timeline ruler.
- ✔ Use the CTI (Current Time Indicator) to set the current playback and editing location in the Timeline.
- ✔ Control aspects of a clip directly in the Timeline. You can set keyframes for effects or adjust audio levels using audio rubberbands. (See Chapter 12 for more on working with effects; Chapter 13 shows you how to work with audio.)
- ✔ Use the Zoom control to zoom your view of the Timeline in and out.
- ✔ Move items by simply dragging-and-dropping them to new locations in the Timeline. If your clip calls for some effects and transitions, you can add them by dragging them to the Timeline as well.

Palettes

Admittedly, the Project window, the Monitor, and the Timeline are the three primary components of Adobe Premiere Pro. An introduction to Adobe Premiere can't stop there though. You should also know about palettes. Premiere stores some of its advanced features and effects in small floating windows called *palettes*. If you're familiar with other Adobe programs such as Photoshop and Illustrator, you're probably already familiar with palettes. To view a couple of palettes, do this:

1. Choose **Window**⇨**History**.
2. Choose **Window**⇨**Info**.

You should now have two floating palettes on your screen that look something like the ones in Figure 1-7. You can move these palettes around by dragging the title bar, or close them by clicking the little Close (x) button in the upper-right corner. Use the Window menu to re-open the palettes again. To resize a palette, click-and-drag an edge or corner of the palette.

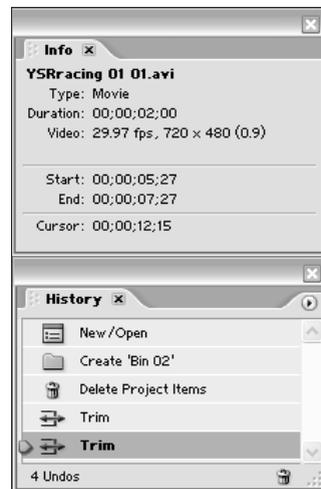


Figure 1-7:
Premiere
Pro stores
some
commands
on floating
palettes.

Commanding the interface

As I mention in the “Foolish Assumptions” section of the Introduction, one of the assumptions I make about you is that you already know how to open and close programs on your computer. You probably also know how to open menus, click buttons, and resize or minimize windows.

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That said, Adobe Premiere is so advanced (and video editing is so demanding of a computer's resources) that I suspect you've recently bought a new computer — and there's a good chance you've recently “switched camps” from Macintosh to your first Windows PC. To help ease your transition, I want to provide a brief overview of the basic interface controls in the Windows versions of Adobe Premiere Pro.



Adobe Premiere Pro requires Windows XP. Either the Home or Professional edition will suffice. You can't run Premiere Pro in Windows 2000, Windows Me, or any previous version of Windows. If you're new to Windows XP, I suggest you purchase a book with more detailed information on using and managing the system. I recommend *Windows XP For Dummies*, by Andy Rathbone (published by Wiley Publishing, Inc.).

The fundamental look and feel of the Microsoft Windows interface has not changed significantly since Windows 95 was released in (ahem) 1995, although the cosmetics were modernized a bit with the release of Windows XP. Figure 1-8 shows a typical Premiere Pro screen. To launch Premiere Pro, click the Start button to open the Start menu and choose All Programs → Adobe Premiere Pro. If you use Premiere Pro a lot, it will probably show up in the list of commonly used programs that appears when you first click Start. Basic controls include

- ✓ **Start menu:** Use this menu to access programs on your computer, as well as shut down and restart controls. The Start menu is similar in concept to the Apple menu on a Macintosh.
- ✓ **Taskbar:** All currently open programs will have a button on the Taskbar. Click a program's button on the Taskbar to open it. The Taskbar is similar in concept to the Mac OS X Dock.
- ✓ **Minimize:** Click this to minimize a window. When a program is minimized, it becomes a button on the Taskbar. Use this button like you would the Collapse or Minimize buttons on a Mac.
- ✓ **Restore/Maximize:** Use this button to change the window size. Restore/Maximize works like the Zoom button in the Mac OS.
- ✓ **Close:** Click this to close a program or window.



If you don't like digging through the Start menu every time you want to launch Premiere, right-click the Adobe Premiere Pro link in the Start menu and choose Send To → Desktop (create shortcut) from the menu that appears. Doing so creates a desktop icon that you can double-click when you want to launch Premiere Pro.

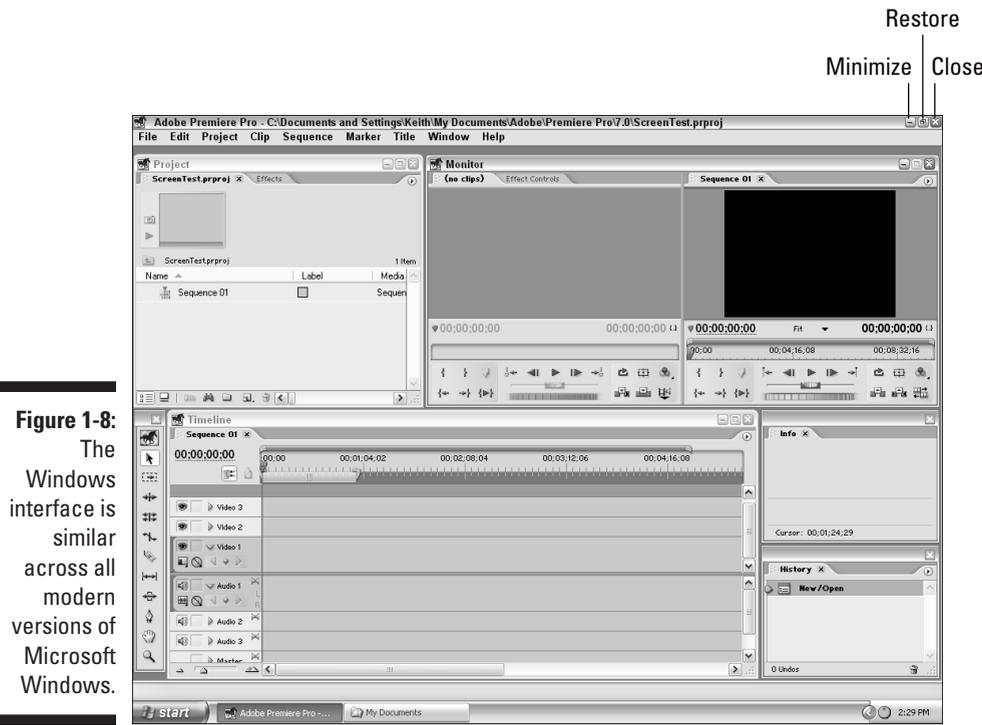
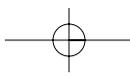


Figure 1-8: The Windows interface is similar across all modern versions of Microsoft Windows.



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