



T H R E E S I X T Y

NextCue

Professional Cue Timer for Live Events

Version 1.2.5

by ThreeSixty.pt

Thank you for using our software. We are committed to providing reliable tools that help simplify and enhance your audiovisual and multimedia operations.

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1. Introduction

NextCue is a professional cue timer for live events and broadcast, designed and built by ThreeSixty.pt. It runs on Windows 10 and 11, and turns any PC into a reliable countdown controller for stage, broadcast, conferences, and worship use.

Key capabilities

- High-resolution rundown-based countdown with per-cue duration, thresholds and end-of-cue effects (sound, blink, colour invert).
- Pixel-perfect fullscreen output on any connected monitor.
- **NDI 6** output (with optional transparent alpha channel for OBS / vMix / Resolume).
- **Bitfocus Companion** integration over TCP — drives Stream Deck and other control surfaces.
- **HTTP REST API** and **OSC** for remote control.
- Live **HTML overlay** for browser-source compositing.
- Cue-state **JSON endpoint** for custom agents and scripts.
- Configurable overlay messages, blackout, operator lock.
- Cloud-validated licensing with 30-day offline grace.

2. System requirements & installation

Required on every machine

Operating system	Windows 10 or 11, 64-bit .
Processor	x64 with SSE 4.2 (required by the NDI library).
Memory	2 GB RAM minimum, 4 GB recommended.
Display	1280x720 minimum; a second monitor for fullscreen output.
.NET runtime	.NET 8 Desktop Runtime — bundled with the installer; downloaded automatically when missing.
Internet	Required for licence activation and re-validation.

Installation steps

1. Download **NextCue-Setup-1.2.5.exe** from your supplier.
2. Right-click → *Run as administrator*.
3. Accept the destination folder (default `C:\Program Files\NextCue\`) or choose another.
4. Leave the optional tasks ticked — Desktop shortcut and Windows-Firewall exceptions help most setups.
5. If the .NET 8 Desktop Runtime is missing, NextCue installs it silently.
6. Launch NextCue from the new Desktop shortcut or the Start Menu.

Firewall rules added by the installer:

```
TCP 8081 — HTTP REST API
TCP 3000 — Bitfocus Companion
UDP 9000 — OSC receive
TCP 7070 — Cue-state HTTP / HTML overlay
all — NDI
```

3. License activation and trial mode

First launch

On the first launch with no cached licence, NextCue grants a **5-minute trial**. An orange banner under the menu counts down the remaining trial time:

```
■ TRIAL MODE - time remaining: 4:32 [ Activate License... ]
```

Clicking **Activate License...** in the banner — or letting the countdown reach 0:00 — opens the License Activation dialog. Enter the licence key you received and click **Activate**. NextCue validates against ThreeSixty.pt's server, caches the licence locally with an HMAC-signed file, and unlocks for the full validity period.

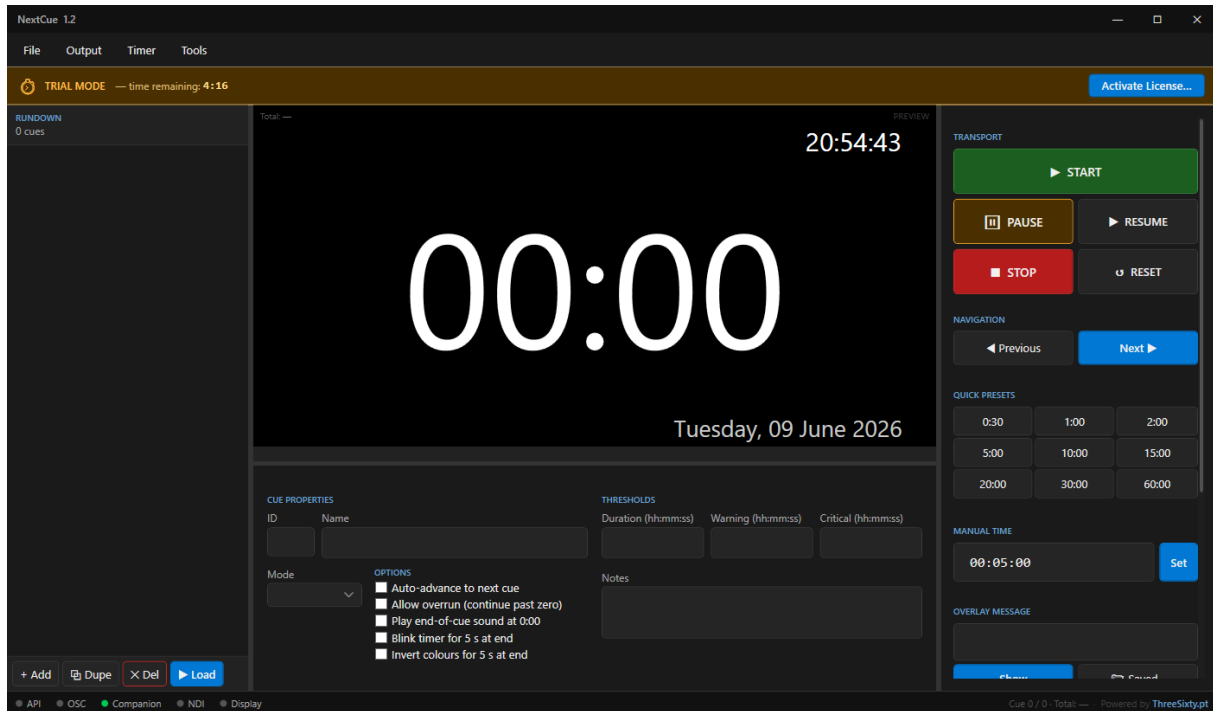
Online and offline behaviour

Online check at launch	Every launch, NextCue re-validates the cached licence.
Offline grace	If the cache is still valid, NextCue runs offline for up to 30 days from the last successful check.
Expired or invalid	The License dialog blocks startup — re-enter a fresh key.
Tampered cache file	Detected via HMAC — also blocking; re-enter the key.

Moving the licence

Open *Settings* → *License* on the source PC and click **Deactivate License on This Computer**. The app closes and the licence becomes free to activate on a different machine. NextCue's licence server tracks one active machine per key, so deactivating frees the slot.

4. The main window



The NextCue main window — rundown on the left, preview and cue editor in the centre, transport controls on the right.

The interface is organised in three columns plus a status bar:

- **Left — Rundown.** The list of cues, with Add / Duplicate / Delete / Load buttons.
- **Centre top — Preview.** A live, pixel-accurate replica of the fullscreen output.
- **Centre bottom — Cue Properties.** Edit ID, name, mode, duration, thresholds, end-of-cue options.
- **Right — Transport.** Start / Pause / Resume / Stop / Reset, navigation, presets, manual time input, overlay message, output controls and lock.
- **Bottom — Status bar.** Live indicators for API, OSC, Companion, NDI and Display services.

5. Working with cues

Cue properties

ID	Short identifier for use with Companion's <i>Fire timer with ID</i> . Auto-assigned as 1, 2, 3... but freely editable.
Name	Display name shown on the output.
Mode	Countdown / Count Up / Stopwatch / Time of Day.
Duration	HH:MM:SS — the total cue length.
Warning / Critical	Thresholds (in remaining time) that trigger colour changes.
Auto-advance	Automatically loads the next cue when this one finishes.
Allow overrun	Keeps counting past zero into negative; otherwise the timer freezes at 0:00.
Play end-of-cue sound	Plays the default end-of-cue sound the moment the timer reaches 0:00 (even with overrun on).
Blink for 5 s at end	Flashes the timer text on/off for 5 seconds after 0:00.
Invert colours for 5 s	Swaps timer text and background colours for 5 seconds — a hard-to-miss visual alert.

Rundown actions

+ Add	Append a new cue at the end.
■ Dupe	Duplicate the selected cue.
× Del	Delete the selected cue.
■ Load	Load the selected cue into the timer (without firing).
Drag	Reorder cues by dragging.
Ctrl+Shift+N	Quick-add a new cue from anywhere in the app.

6. Running the timer

Transport buttons (right column)

■ Start / Resume	Begin (or resume) the loaded cue.
■ Pause	Pause; the time-of-day style colour changes to indicate paused state.
■ Stop	Stop without resetting.
■ Reset	Reload the cue to its starting value.
■ Previous / Next ■	Walk through the rundown.

Quick presets

The right panel exposes one-click presets: 0:30, 1:00, 2:00, 5:00, 10:00, 15:00, 20:00, 30:00, 60:00.

Manual time and overlay

Type any `HH:MM:SS` into the *Manual Time* box and press Enter (or click **Set**) to override the remaining time. Use the *Overlay Message* box to broadcast free-form text on top of the timer — toggle Show / Hide; the text persists between toggles. Tap ■ **Saved...** to manage a library of pre-saved messages for instant recall.

Output controls

■ Toggle Output Window	Open / close the fullscreen display window. Goes blue when active.
■ NDI On / ■ NDI Running	Start / stop the NDI sender. Goes blue when sending.
■ Blackout	Cover preview, fullscreen and NDI with a solid black overlay — for emergencies and stand-by moments.
■ Lock System	Disable transport buttons to prevent accidental operation. Unlock with Ctrl+L.

7. The output window

The output window is a borderless fullscreen renderer that draws the same canvas you see in the preview — exact same fonts, colours, positions, scaled to whatever monitor you choose.

Choosing the monitor

Open *Settings* → *Output Display* → *Output monitor*. The list shows each connected screen with its native resolution and a [Primary] tag where applicable. The selection persists between launches.

Per-monitor DPI handling

NextCue uses the Windows `PerMonitorV2` DPI awareness model and the Win32 `SetWindowPos` API to position the fullscreen window. This guarantees that the output exactly covers the selected monitor regardless of any DPI scaling (100 %, 150 %, 200 %) or mixed-DPI multi-monitor configurations.

Auto-open on launch

Tick *Settings* → *Output Display* → *Auto-open output window on launch* to skip a click every time you start a show.

8. Settings reference

Open Settings from *Tools* → *Settings...* or from the right panel. Press **Esc** to close. Settings always open on the same monitor as the main window.

8.1 Output Display tab

Output monitor	Pick which physical screen carries the fullscreen output.
Timer colours	Background, Normal (running), Warning, Critical, Overrun, Title, Subtitle, Paused. State changes follow the per-cue thresholds.
Progress bar colours	Independent set of colours for the progress bar (Track, Normal, Warning, Critical, Overrun).
Progress bar behaviour	Fill mode (Empties / Fills), Direction (LTR / RTL), Corner radius in pixels.
General	Auto-open output window on launch, Auto-save rundown.

8.2 NDI Output tab

Enable NDI	Master switch. NDI cannot be started unless this is on.
Auto-start NDI on launch	Begin transmission as soon as the app loads.
Source name	Name advertised on the network (default <i>NextCue</i>).
Resolution	Custom or 1920×1080 / 1280×720 / 3840×2160 presets.
Frame rate	25 / 30 / 50 / 60 fps.
Transparent background	Sends straight (non-premultiplied) BGRA with alpha = 0 for the background, ideal for OBS / vMix overlay compositing.

8.3 Network / API tab

HTTP API	Enable + port (default 8081). REST endpoints under <i>/api/...</i>
OSC	Enable + receive port (default 9000).
Companion TCP	Enable + port (default 3000). Speaks the presentationtools-cuetimer protocol.
Cue State HTTP	Always-on. Configurable port (default 7070) and an <i>Allow LAN</i> toggle to bind to 0.0.0.0 instead of 127.0.0.1.

8.4 HTML Output tab

Controls the styling of the live overlay page served at the cue-state HTTP endpoint. Drop the URL into an OBS Browser Source for a transparent live-timer overlay.

Live overlay URL	Shown at the top with Open in browser and Copy buttons.
Page background	Transparent (OBS-friendly) or solid colour.
Label (cue name)	Show / hide, font, size in vh, colour, style.
Timer	Font, size (vh), bold/italic, normal colour, plus separate colours for Paused / Overrun / No-signal.
Status text	Show / hide, font, size (vh), colour, style.

Hot-reload: changes take effect as soon as you refresh the browser source — no app restart needed. Only the port and LAN toggle require restart.

8.5 Sounds tab

Default end-of-cue sound	Played when any cue reaches 0:00 — provided the cue has the <i>Play end-of-cue sound</i> option enabled.
Sound library	Seven sounds ship bundled (End Of Game, Whistle, Typewriter, Spell of Time, etc.). User-added WAVs are listed below them with their full file paths.
+ Add Sound File...	Pick any WAV from disk. The library entry persists across launches.

8.6 Layout tab

Per-element positioning and styling for the on-screen output: Message, Countdown, Name, Clock, Date, Progress bar, Logo. Each row has On / Location / V (px) / H (px) / Size / W / Color / Font / Style / Border / Logo file (where applicable). All offsets scale proportionally with output resolution. The V arrows are inverted so ▲ moves the element visually *up*.

8.7 License tab

Status	Active / Expired / Invalid / Not activated, with colour-coded dot.
Key	Your licence key (read-only).
Licensed to	Customer-name field returned by the licence server.
Expires	Local-time expiry date.
Days remaining	Whole days until expiry.
Last validated	Local time of the most recent successful server check.
Machine ID	Anonymous SHA-256 fingerprint — the value sent with each validation.
Deactivate	Wipes the cache and quits NextCue. Use this to move the licence to another PC.

8.8 About tab

Shows the version (1.2.5), publisher (ThreeSixty.pt), support email (support@threesixty.pt) and the ThreeSixty logo. Click the email link to open your mail client.

9. Integrations

9.1 Bitfocus Companion (recommended)

The dedicated **NextCue Companion module** ships with NextCue — install it once and every button is preconfigured.

- In Companion: *Connections* → *Add connection*, search for **NextCue**.
- **Host**: the IP address of the PC running NextCue.
- **TCP port**: 3000 (the default in NextCue's Settings → Network → Companion TCP).
- Drag the ready-made presets from the categories: Transport / Time / Output / Display.

Actions exposed by the module include:

Start, Fire Next, Cue Next, Reload current cue, Fire / Cue timer with ID, Pause/Resume, Restart, Undo, +1 / -1 minute, +X / -X minutes, Set Duration, Fullscreen (on/off/toggle), NDI toggle, Blackout (on/off/toggle), Set/Clear message, Move selection up/down, Reload rundown.

Live variables exposed: `time_full`, `time_hours`, `time_minutes`, `time_seconds`, `speed`, `cue_name`, `end_time`, `next_cue_name`, `fg_color`, `bg_color` plus booleans for `is_fullscreen`, `is_ndi`, `is_paused`, `is_blackout`, `is_message`.

9.2 HTTP REST API

Enable in *Settings* → *Network* → *HTTP API*. Binds to all interfaces on the configured port (default 8081). The status bar shows the LAN URL to use.

Endpoint	Method	Notes
/api/status	GET	Live snapshot JSON
/api/start	POST	Start the current cue
/api/pause / resume / stop	POST	Transport
/api/reset	POST	Reset
/api/next / previous	POST	Take next / previous cue
/api/set-time	POST	Body: {"time":"00:05:00"}
/api/set-message	POST	Body: {"message":"text"}
/api/load-cue	POST	Body: {"id":"3"} or {"index":"2"}
/api/output/fullscreen	POST	Body: {"action":"toggle" "open" "close"}
/api/output/ndi/start	POST	Start NDI
/api/output/ndi/stop	POST	Stop NDI

9.3 OSC

Enable in *Settings* → *Network* → *OSC*. Listens on UDP port 9000 by default.

<code>/timer/start</code>	Start the current cue.
<code>/timer/pause</code>	Pause.
<code>/timer/resume</code>	Resume.
<code>/timer/stop</code>	Stop.
<code>/timer/reset</code>	Reset.
<code>/timer/next</code>	Take next cue.
<code>/timer/message</code>	First string argument becomes the overlay message.
<code>/timer/settime</code>	First int/float argument (seconds) becomes the remaining time.

9.4 Live HTML overlay

Always-on, served from the cue-state HTTP endpoint. Open in any browser, or drop the URL into an **OBS Browser Source**:

```
http://127.0.0.1:7070/ or, with LAN access on: http://<this-PC's-IP>:7070/
```

Styles (font, size in vh, colours, background) come from *Settings* → *HTML Output* and hot-reload on browser refresh. The page polls `/cue` every 250 ms; if the heartbeat is more than 5 s stale, the timer dims to *no signal* grey instead of leaving a frozen number on screen.

9.5 Cue-state JSON for agents

GET `http://<host>:7070/cue` returns the live snapshot. Designed for agents and scripts: **raw millisecond integers** (no locale formatting) and an ISO-8601 UTC `updatedAt` heartbeat for stale-data detection.

```
{
  "state": "running",
  "label": "Keynote",
  "clock": "2026-06-09T22:43:24",
  "elapsedMs": 123456,
  "remainingMs": 60000,
  "endsAt": "2026-06-09T22:44:24",
  "updatedAt": "2026-06-09T22:43:24.500Z"
}
```

10. Keyboard shortcuts

Shortcut	Action	Menu
Space	Start (Resume)	Timer
Shift+Space	Pause	Timer
Ctrl+R	Reset	Timer
Ctrl+.	Stop	Timer
Ctrl+→	Take Next cue	Timer
Ctrl+←	Take Previous cue	Timer
Ctrl+T	Run 10-second test	Timer
Ctrl+Shift+N	Add Cue	Timer
Ctrl+N	New Rundown	File
Ctrl+O	Open Rundown...	File
Ctrl+S	Save Rundown...	File
F11	Toggle Output Window	Output
Ctrl+L	Lock / Unlock	Tools
Esc / F11	Close output window	(in output)
Esc	Close any dialog	(everywhere)

11. Troubleshooting

Installer is flagged as a virus

Unsigned executables can trigger SmartScreen and some antivirus heuristics. Click **More info** → **Run anyway** on the SmartScreen banner. If your antivirus quarantines the file, submit it as a false positive at microsoft.com/wdsi/filesubmission. A signed build is planned.

Fullscreen output is too small / spans monitors

From version 1.2.2 onwards, NextCue uses physical-pixel positioning so this should never happen. If you do see it: ensure your installation is 1.2.2 or newer, then close any other apps that may be forcing DPI virtualisation on NextCue.

NDI starts then stops with no output

Confirm *Settings* → *NDI Output* → *Enable NDI* is ticked, and the resolution matches what your receiver expects. The *NDI On* button briefly turns blue then back to grey if the receiver is not reachable. Check Windows Firewall for inbound rules.

License dialog says “Server unreachable”

NextCue contacts <https://threesixty.pt/functions/licenseValidatePublic>. Check that this URL is reachable from the host and that no corporate proxy is intercepting TLS. After a successful activation, NextCue runs offline for up to 30 days.

Companion connects but no actions take effect

Verify the host IP and port (default 3000) in Companion's connection match NextCue's *Settings* → *Network* → *Companion TCP* → *TCP Port*. Restart NextCue after changing the port.

HTML overlay shows “no signal”

The overlay greys out when the `/cue` endpoint hasn't responded in 5 seconds. Confirm NextCue is running and that the URL in the browser matches the configured port (default 7070). If you opened the overlay from another machine, make sure *Allow access from other computers on the LAN* is enabled.

12. Support and contact



ThreeSixty.pt

Email: support@threesixty.pt

Web: threesixty.pt

When contacting support, please include:

- Your NextCue version (Settings → About)
- Your Windows version (Windows 10 22H2, Windows 11 23H2, etc.)
- Your machine ID (Settings → License → Machine ID)
- A description of what you did, what you expected, and what happened
- If applicable, the log file at %APPDATA%\NextCue\nextcue.log

Thank you for choosing NextCue.

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