

Chapter 8 – Editing

Once you have all your video pieces in order, it's time to assemble them in a way that communicates the message you are trying to get across to your audience. This is achieved by the juxtaposing visuals and sound using a computer program, and 'exporting' the finished video in one file, which can then be 'uploaded' to the internet as well as shown to people in your community on a DVD, for example.

Before you edit, you need to make sure that your video clips are in a format that is acceptable by the editing program that you plan to use. In the case of WAVE participants, the Canon FS-200 camera records in MOD format and has to be converted to mpeg format using Pixela ImageMixer software on a computer that has Windows operating system. This software is included with the camera kit and we recommend that you install both CDs 1 and 2. Please refer to the step-by-step tutorials available on the WAVE site, called 'Transferring videos to your computer' and 'Pixela Editing'.

Once you convert the video files into mpeg format, you can double click the ImageMixer icon on your desktop again and you will see a 'browsing and authoring' button. If you click on that, the ImageMixer program will open to a library where you will see your video clips. Now you can click on 'Movie Edit', then 'Edit New Movie', select 'Highest Quality' and 'Wide' and click OK. Next, you can drag video clips into the timeline and crop by dragging clips to the right or left, removing undesired portions of the video clips. Once you have a sequence of all the usable parts of your video clips, you can click on the 'Save' tab and save the sequence of video clips as one longer mpeg clip.

This longer mpeg clip will still be a smaller file size than sending all the MOD or Mpeg video clips separately to WAVE for editing. However, some editing programs do not recognise mpeg files, so you may have to further convert these into quicktime movie files or avi files using a video converter program such as Mpeg Streamclip, which can be downloaded from the net for free.

Besides video clips, you may also want to include Voice-over (VO), music, still pictures and text in your video. Here are simple instructions and tips about each of these different elements:

Voice-over (VO): You can simply record voice-over by connecting the mic to your camera and recording yourself speaking on video. When you send us these video clips to edit, we will have the option of keeping your image speaking for some time (also known as A-roll) or using other images (also known as B-roll) over your voice.

Alternatively, you could also record your voice on the computer directly by plugging the mic into the mic jack of your computer, if there is one. However, you would need a sound recording program such as Audacity, which you can download for free. The benefit of recording sound only without video is that

the file size is much smaller. On the other hand, the editor will not have the option of showing the person speaking or A-roll on camera.

Music: A good rule of thumb for background music is to select a song that fits the mood you are trying to convey. For example, it may not be appropriate to put a fast Bollywood song in a video about a flood disaster. Also remember that if you want music to play while someone is talking, then the music should be instrumental and not have any lyrics being sung at the same time. Lastly, it's best to use copyright free music, or music that you have recorded locally, because some video websites such as YouTube will mute the audio of your video that is uploaded there, so people may not enjoy watching your video. So most Western music that is well known will not be allowed, nor will famous Indian songs.

Still photos: You can also use pictures in your video, but make sure the pictures you choose are in focus, not too bright or dark, and cropped to the right size, before you send to WAVE editors.

You can then email files to WAVE for editing under 10 mb (such as pictures, scripts, music tracks, VO, etc), or use a big file transfer service such as www.mediafire.com or www.fileflyer.com available for free online, to send us larger video files that are 100-300 mb. If your video file is larger than 300 mb, it may be a good idea to split the file into two parts, so the file size reduces by half as well, which makes it easier to send across.

Tips for Editing yourself

The program we recommend for editing is Windows Movie Maker, which is included with many Windows operating systems. You can find links to detailed tutorials on the WAVE website, or video tutorials on YouTube.

Here are some handy tips to edit like a professional:

- Make sure your computer has an anti-virus program running. A few WAVE participants have captured their video clips to the computer, but then found them to be corrupt as a result of a virus.
- Remember, it's very important to be organised when you are editing. One way is to name your files describing them in one or two key words.
- Avoid putting one similar shot after another as this will look like a 'jump'. Instead insert a shot of something else in between and then return to the similar looking shot, if you must. You can also put a 'cross dissolve' transition in between, to establish continuity between shots, but this doesn't always look good.
- Keep your video short and to the point. When we shoot and edit our own videos, we often tend to get attached to our shots and keep the video longer than needed. Remember, the shorter your video is, the more likely you will hold the attention of your audience.

- WAVE participants should also remember that the Canon FS200 shoots in widescreen or 16:9 format so if you are editing yourself, then you should adjust the settings in your editing program accordingly.
- Don't use fancy transitions that get noticed by the viewer. A simple fade in at the beginning of your video or section; fade out at the end of your video or section; or a cross dissolve between two clips in the same section works best.
- Don't make transitions too long. Depending on the tone and pace of your video, a transition of 10-20 frames should be sufficient length or duration to make your video look smoother.
- Shoot a lot of 'B-roll' or visuals of something/someone other than a person speaking. Shots like street scenes, facial close-ups, your interviewee walking or working, make for great cover-up shots during editing. Remember that it is boring to watch 'talking heads' or people on screen talking for a long period of time. Instead your viewer will learn more about the subject if you show them various shots while your interviewee is speaking.
- Three or more still pictures or video clips that take place in the same place or of the same person tend to establish an idea about them. So it's a good idea to shoot a variety of shots that can create a 'montage', which is a French word for 'show'.
- Use simple text titles that are not too flashy – no fancy fonts or colours, unless you have a very good reason.
- Keep subtitles (text explaining what someone is saying in a different language) for long enough time so that your audience can comfortably read what is written.
- Make sure you proof-read your subtitles as misspellings are common and can be caught if you go over your text carefully.
- Do use appropriate music, it will add value to your video.
- Watch your video a few times and get feedback from friends, when you are learning how to edit. Be original rather than copying something you have seen on TV or in a movie. Make sure that every visual or sound that occurs in your edit, is there because it is communicating the story or your message, not for any other reason.
- Watch a lot of videos with a critical eye and analyse why certain techniques or visuals have been used, and when, as well as what emotions you feel as a result.

Exporting Your Video

Once you are satisfied that the video clips, sound and music are all in the right place and that your video is creating the desired impact, you will need to

'export' your video to an appropriate format for uploading to the internet. Remember, a good rule of thumb, is that you will preserve a reasonable level of quality if your source video clips are higher resolution and once you edit, you can export to a lower resolution or smaller file size, so people can quickly watch your videos online.

Usually, the export command is in the file menu, similar to the save command. For WAVE participants shooting with the Canon FS-200, remember that your clips have been shot in widescreen format, and should be exported to a wide frame size. A good widescreen frame size for the web, which is also what WAVE currently uses, is 480x270. Also, a smaller frame size drastically reduces the file size, enabling people to watch your video faster online. By the way, reducing your frame size, and therefore file size, also enables you to send unedited video files on the net more easily.

An ideal file size for people with slow net connections to be able to watch your video is between 5 to 10 megabytes (mb) for a 2-3 minute video. Here are a few formats that create smaller file sizes, ideal for the web:

- 1) Flash or .flv extension – Most video websites use this format since it creates a very small file size.
- 2) Quicktime movie or .mov extension – H.264 is a great codec often used in Quicktime movies and creates a small file size without compromising quality.
- 3) Mpeg or MP4 – Mpeg 4 is the most recent format in this range, small file sizes, good for web upload, but not great for editing. In fact, many editing programs do not recognise this format while importing.
- 4) 3gp – Not good enough quality for uploading to the web, but very small file sizes, which make these good for emailing previews of your video.
- 5) VOB/DAT extensions – These are DVD or VCD files, that again, are not good quality to export to the web, and also not recognised by most editing programs.

Other settings: If your editing program allows you to customise other export settings, you can choose a frame rate of 15, bit rate of 220 kbps, and AAC 32-bit stereo audio (although audio compression doesn't impact file size as much as video).

Uploading your video

Once your file is exported with a reasonably small file size, you can upload your video to any of the video sites like YouTube, Blip.tv, Vimeo.com, etc. You can also upload your video to all these sites at once, as well as social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter by using www.TubeMogul.com.

However, WAVE participants are requested to send their videos to WAVE first, and they will upload your videos for you.

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