

VIDEO, continued from page 2

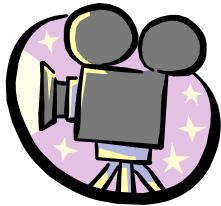
The second point is that just as your record is likely to sound better if it is mixed by a professional engineer with decades of experience, rather than by your bass player who bought Pro Tools LE three weeks ago, your band's video is likely to have more of an impact if someone with some knowledge and experience in video production is involved in the process. That being said, there is lots of amazing music and video being produced by self taught independent artists with the creative and financial freedom that the latest generation of tools offers.

The most important part of the process of getting video of your band onto the web is shooting the actual video footage. If there is any budget at all to invest in hiring a professional (or at least an experienced amateur) this is the place to spend it. With well shot, well lit footage of your performances, you will have infinite creative possibilities once the footage is on the computer. However, the most expensive and feature rich video software in the world may not be enough to salvage shaky, nasty, poorly lit video. As with hiring a producer, engineer or anyone else, if you are hiring someone to shoot video for you ask to see some of their work and make sure it is up to the standards you are setting for the rest of your work. Also make sure that the video is shot on a digital video camera as it will make the process of bringing it into the computer much simpler and less costly.

Once the footage is shot than all of the remaining steps can take place on the computer. Getting digital video into the computer is simple if your computer comes with a firewire (also known as IE 1394) port. All Macintosh computers for the last five years or so have come with built-in firewire. Many, but not all newer Windows PCs also come with a firewire card. If you happen to own a recent Windows machine without a firewire card you can purchase one for around \$30-\$50. If you are looking to purchase a new computer to produce both music and video it is worth getting the newest fastest machine you can afford. In this writers opinion, the Mac is the stronger platform for audio and especially video.

The really good news for video these days is the software.

First, all you need is one software package to capture the video to your computer, edit it, mix and process the sound, add effects, transitions and titles and output the final production in a variety of formats. There are products at a wide range of prices that can do all of this, but the second piece of good news is that on both Mac and Windows there are entry level programs that do all of this for free. Windows Movie Maker 2.1 is basic editing software that allows for the capture and editing of video and audio and comes with basic effects and transitions. It is available for free as part of the Windows XP Service Pack 2. Movie Maker exports in the Windows Media Player format(.wmv) which requires your viewers to have the Windows Media Player on their machines (available free for Mac and Windows). WMV files can be converted to other formats using a variety of third party applications.



BSW Newsletter

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phone Martha (978) 663-9123.

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Apple's iMovie Application is part of the excellent iLife Suite that ships free on all new Macintosh computers and includes Garage Band, iTunes, iDVD and iPhoto. These applications are tightly integrated so that for example you can edit a video in iMovie using stills from iPhoto and audio from iTunes or Garageband and burn the results directly to DVD using iDVD. This package alone is worth the price of a new Mac.

iMovie comes with lots of audio and video effects such as the "Ken Burns" effect which makes it simple to animate still images ala the well known documentary maker. There are tools for creating text and titles. and the program works well with Quicktime, MPEG4 and even files from Apple's isight webcams. If you are interested in making a feature film or HDTV production iMovie supports HD video capture and widescreen 16:9 productions.

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Video (Continued from p. 3)

Either of these two tools may be enough to do what you need in order to create videos for your website, however if you want to have more control and wider creative possibilities there are a many more powerful (and less free) tools available on both Mac and Windows. Because the metaphors used for video and audio production are very similar, anyone who has used Pro Tools or a similar audio production tool will find many video techniques familiar to them such as editing on a timeline and working with plug-in effects. A few hours of going through the tutorials that come with any of these programs and you should be up and running, and a few days of work should be enough to create your first production. Once you have edited a video production and played it back to your satisfaction in your video app, you are ready to export it to a file for your website. Since the version of your clip that will go on the website is likely to be highly compressed and less than full screen, it is a good idea to also export a full-screen, high-resolution copy of the file and archive it to CD-ROM, DVD or other backup format.

Next month: Putting your video on the Web.

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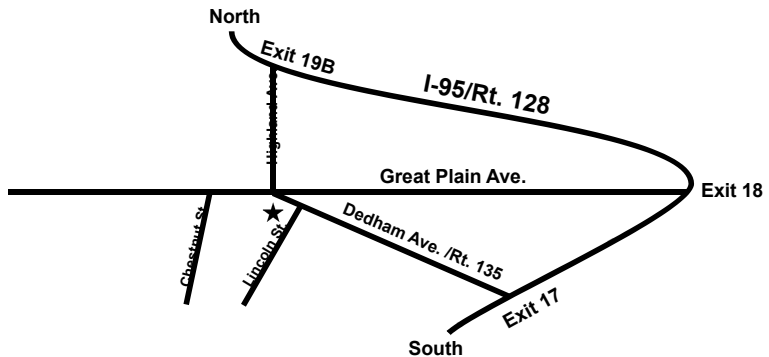


Next BSW Meetings

MAY 10TH and JUNE 14TH

Meetings are held at the First Parish Unitarian-Universalist Church

23 Dedham Street, Needham, MA.



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Enter the church through the door that faces the PARKING LOT. Look for the BSW sign on the door.

Directions:

From the North: Take route 128 south to Exit 19B (Highland Avenue, Needham). Follow oto Great Plain Avenue in Needham Center. Jog slightly to the left

onto Dedham Avenue. Turn immediately right down Lincoln Street beside the church. Turn in the parking lot behind the church and enter the back door.

From the South: Take route 128 north to Exit 17 (route 135) to Lincoln Street. Parking is off Lincoln Street behind the church.

From Boston and Cambridge: Take route 9 west to route 128 south (follow the directions "from the North" above).

BSW Registration - New Members or Membership Renewals

Name(s) _____ Date _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Other Phone _____ E-Mail _____

- Yes, I wish to join the BSW. Enclosed is my check for: \$35 for the Individual Membership New Renewal
- \$50 for the Two-Person Household Membership New Renewal
- No, I do not wish to join the BSW at this time, but keep me informed. Here is my check for: \$10 for the Non-Member Newsletter Subscription New Renewal

Send check and completed form to Brent Hall, 21 Wood Rd. Sherborn, MA 01770