

Video Project Basics

Information for Instructors

Storyboard for Success

Having a script and/or storyboard or a combined form of these is the best way to assure that a video production has everything that's needed, and can be used as a guide for gathering visual and audio content, recording narration and editing everything together. Students sometimes feel uneasy about this since storyboarding is something that is typically foreign to them but, by showing them a few examples, especially ones that don't require them to draw pictures, they will soon learn to appreciate how storyboarding can benefit the video creation process. Scripts and storyboards come in many different forms and can even be combined in various ways. While the traditional video storyboard with pictures and audio in 2 columns is the most recognizable, descriptive storyboards that just describe the images along with the audio that will go with the images is just as useful and sometimes easier for students to create.

General Video Project Tips

- Before starting any multimedia project, it is recommended that students organize all of their content into a single folder on their computer or storage device. This includes any photos, video, music, and documents (scripts, storyboards, etc.). The video project file along with the final movie file should also be saved into the folder simply to avoid losing any content. This is especially important for students who plan to use a public computer to work on their project.
- Shorter is better, especially for students who are new to video production and the technologies involved.
- Scaffolding is a great technique. Before the big video assignment, design a simple video project to introduce the students to the process. A self-introduction video with just a picture of the student and a picture of an activity along with narration would be a good starting point. Students could even add their favorite music without too much difficulty.
- When creating a video with text-heavy title screens and captions, consider suggesting PowerPoint as the way to design the titles/captions. PowerPoint slides can easily be saved as JPG images that can be imported into a video project. Basic video editing programs have limited options for creating text while PowerPoint allows more features in design.
- Encourage students to stick to dissolve transitions, and only when a cut between clips or pictures feels too abrupt or needs to appear smoother. We do not recommend using a lot of different types of transitions. Rather than enhancing a video, having too many variations in transitions actually detract from the message.
- Use no more than 2 different font types for titles. Generally, one font type is enough, especially when you are able to make changes to scale and apply bold attributes to change up the look.
 - If you use text over pictures or video, make sure that it is readable. Changing the color, contrast, positioning, size or applying drop shadows (if available) can separate the text from the background.
- Emphasize that it is important for the student to frequently stop editing and play their video back from the beginning. This should be done continuously throughout the production process to give

the student an idea of how the pacing and flow of the video is progressing. If sections are too long (ie. boring) or too short (confusing), then they can make fixes as they go.

- Best practice is to work on the entire video project using the same computer. There are different versions of iMovie depending on the age of the computer and the operating system that it's running. These versions are not compatible with each other.

Video Editing Software

iMovie for the Mac

iMovie comes standard on all Mac computers. Unlike other video editing programs, iMovie automatically saves your project's progress as you go. iMovie is intuitively designed with many drag & drop features and works collaboratively with other common Mac software such as iPhoto/Photos and iTunes. The latest version of iMovie does not actually offer project file. It stores all iMovie projects in a single iMovie Library file. This can make things confusing for students who work on iMovie projects on a public computer. They must know to take the iMovie Library file (in the user's Movies folder) with them.

Windows Movie Maker

Windows Movie Maker does not come standard on newer Windows machines. However, various versions of Movie Maker are available to download for free from Windows. Visit the webpage <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/get-movie-maker-download> to choose your free download.

Which version of Movie Maker should I use?

Windows Movie Maker 2.6

Movie Maker 2.6, though an older version of the series, has more features than the newer instances but is still limited to one video and one secondary audio track. Movie Maker 2.6 is useful for any video project that requires the accurate placement of pictures, video and text to match narration.

Windows Live Movie Maker / Windows Movie Maker 2012

New versions of Movie Maker (Live Movie Maker 2011 and Movie Maker 2012) are also optional free downloads. While these new editing tools are compatible with more types of video formats than Movie Maker 2.6, they lack the editing features needed for any type of serious editing. Their greatest use is for converting a larger variety of video formats into .WMV format for Movie Maker 2.6 projects and also for quick trimming of videos that do not need to be edited.

VideoPad Editor: An alternative to iMovie and Movie Maker

VideoPad Editor is a free tool available for Windows and Mac. It offers more video and audio tracks than Movie Maker and is compatible with nearly all the new digital video formats. The only downside is that the interface may not seem as user-friendly to beginner editors.

Video Formats & Conversion

Typical camcorders and mobile recording devices formats include but are not limited to .MP4, .3GP, .MTS, .VOB. Most of these formats are not compatible in basic video editing programs without conversion to another file type. It is also worth noting that video editing programs on Macs (iMovie) use different video formats from Windows (Movie Maker 2.6). YouTube videos also require special download and conversion tools.

Conversion Tools

Windows Movie Maker 2.6 requires .WMV format for imported videos. iMovie requires Quicktime formats such as .MOV, .MP4 or .M4V. The following are just a few conversion tools that we recommend. Each one has a free version available.

- Prism Video Converter (Windows)
- Windows Live Movie Maker (Windows)
- FLV Crunch (Mac)
- RealPlayer Downloader (Win / Mac)
- YouTubeInMP4.com (Win / Mac) free web-based tool that converts to MP4
- CloudConvert.org (Win / Mac) free web-based tool that converts between over 100 file formats, from audio, video, to documents and images

Saving the Movie vs. saving the Project

One of the biggest points of confusion is the difference between saving the “project” and saving the “movie”. The project file will only open in the video editing software in which it was created and is intended for when the student needs to return to the video and make edits. It is important that the student saves the project continuously throughout the editing process so that their progress is not lost in the instance of a computer crash. The movie file is the finished product that should be able to play back in numerous video player tools such as Windows Media Player, VLC Player or Quicktime Player. This file can also typically be uploaded to YouTube or KSUTube. The final video/movie file is what would be turned in for class.

The Editing Workflow

1. Always start with narration (or sometimes music) then add pictures or video clips to match what is being said in the narration, the music lyrics or even to the beat of the music.
2. Insert and trim interview video as you go.
 - a. Add “cut-away” pictures or video when appropriate over an interview
3. Add titles/credits
4. Add music and/or sound effects if being used to enhance the mood or feeling of the video.
5. Save the video project as you go.
6. Save the final movie file when finished.

Submitting final videos

Considerations / Recommendations

To avoid issues with file types and the occasional challenge of having Mac videos play on Windows machines, we recommend that students upload their finished videos either to KSUTube (ksutube.kent.edu) or YouTube and share the link to the video with their instructors. Students already have free accounts on both KSUTube and YouTube simply by using their Flashline credentials.

Video files can be very large - generally too large to share through email. If you would prefer having the actual video file in hand, another option would be to have the student upload the video file to Google Drive or KSU Dropbox. Files exceeding 1gb is quite common with 5-7 minute videos, which could even be too large for Google Drive and Dropbox. This is another reason to consider accepting KSUTube and YouTube links as an appropriate way to submit a final video. It is also important to make sure that the students are submitting the final movie/video file and not the project file itself. The final video file would be in a format such as WMV, MOV and MP4.

AV Equipment

Camcorders and tripods are available for checkout for free through the University Library Circulation Desk. Also available for checkout are wireless microphones with smartphone adapters. For more information on available equipment visit the Circulation Desk's page at:

<http://www.library.kent.edu/about/departments/circulation/equipment>

About the Student Multimedia Studio

The SMS provides currently enrolled KSU students with a wide range of multimedia equipment, software, and support, all for FREE (including 3D printing!). The studio is open 7 days per week during the semester and mostly on a first come, first served basis. From tutorials online to trained staff on hand, we are here to help!

Additional Resources

Student Multimedia Studio (SMS) homepage: <http://www.library.kent.edu/sms>

Free multimedia tools and software: <http://libguides.library.kent.edu/smsfree>

Free tutorials: <http://www.library.kent.edu/about/departments/student-multimedia-studio/sms-tutorial>