

Web Videos Made Easy

Find out all the tools you'll need and the basic information to make amazing cat videos.

By Joseph Gannon

Before shooting a video of your cat, I'd recommend you first come up with a concept. My idea was simple: produce a movie that I could synchronize with music that I created. First, I took shots of my cats playing with a toy, and sitting around acting inquisitively. Still, a cat is a cat, and admittedly it was sometimes hard to get them to fully cooperate. That's why I'd recommend you shoot a variety of different scenes and interact with your cat to see what works best.

Tools You Need

To create the video you'll need a camera preferably with a USB 2.0 or FireWire port (IEEE 1394). These connections allow you to hook up a camera to your computer so you can easily transfer it.

USB Connector

FireWire - IEEE 1394

Newer computers and cameras are usually equipped with either or both connections. Although data transfer speeds are similar, FireWire doesn't rely on the computer processor, and thus is preferable.

Older cameras or computers may not have FireWire or USB 2.0 capabilities. However, you can still transfer the video through the use of video cable and a video capture card. Consult your local electronics store for an appropriate capture card and installation procedures. You may then use video transfer software such as InterVideo Win DVD Creator, or other video editing software, to record the video to your computer.

Make It Shine

Now you'll need to do some post-production work to edit the clips and piece everything together for a more polished look. There's a variety of video editing software programs to do the job, such as Windows Movie Maker, Adobe Premiere, Vegas and iMovie HD.

How I Did It

1. Using a film editor, I cut and pasted clips of my cats, along with related footage.
2. Next, I imported pictures of my cats that I jazzed up with photo editing software. (See "Making the Image Purrrific" below.)
3. I inserted transition effects, such as crossfade, venetian blinds, wipe and page peel, between each video clip for a more professional look.
4. I added music. You can either use royalty-free sounds clips, or make your own tune. I created music with ACID – a multi-track loop-based software program.
5. Now you'll need to decide the video format for your final product. While MPEG-2 is common, MPEG-4 is becoming more popular for use with portable devices like an IPOD because it can attain DVD-quality video at a smaller file size. Popular MPEG-4 formats include DivX and XviD encoded video.

For a sample look at my video, [click here](#). (WMV Format, 6.5 MB)

Finishing Touches

If you simply want to show the world just how adorable your cats are, you can upload your video to a website like www.youtube.com.

Or, you can choose to syndicate it as a video podcast. What's the difference between a video and a podcast? According to Bart G. Farkas, author of "Secrets of Podcasting," a podcast "is distributed via RSS (Really Simple Syndication)." With RSS, users can subscribe to your video content.



Resources to Learn More on How to Make Videos
Here are some helpful links to check out:

<http://www.rss-specifications.com/create-rss-feed.htm>
<http://www.apple.com/quicktime/tutorials/creatingvideo.html>
<http://www.macworld.com/2006/03/secrets/aprilcreate/index.php>

Joseph Gannon is a freelance writer, musician and DJ with three adorable cats, Beanie, Chelsea and April. He publishes several blogs, including dancingwithmycat.com and housedimensions.com. He also produces a weekly podcast for pulseradio.net.