

THE VIDEO LAUNCH CODE

WORKBOOK 4

Editing Your Videos

The Simple Science of Building Your Message



Visible
Authority

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Element 1: The One-Shot	4
Element 2: The Jump Cut	5
Element 3: B-Roll.....	6
Element 4: On-Screen Text.....	9
Element 5: Still Images	13
Element 6: The Animated Opening and Closing	17
Final Words... ..	22

"We're gonna need a bigger boat"
Richard Dreyfuss - Jaws

Introduction

Let's face it. Editing is where your raw footage becomes a video someone will want to watch. And while it can be as complicated as you want, it can also be pretty simple. As in all things, it will be a tradeoff between quality and ease of use.

The trick is to keep it simple while insuring a high-quality viewing experience. So that's what we'll focus on.

I'm going to assume that you've shot against a green screen, so some of this advice will help you over the humps of matting out things you don't want seen, like light stands over to the side, as well as reminding you to be aware of where your image sits on the page.



It might be helpful for you to...

...[watch this primer](#).

It's on the basics of editing almost any video you might produce to teach something. Most of these elements will go into your pre-launch videos.

But we'll be making a few changes along the way...

Element 1: The One-Shot

For a launch video, you just don't sit down. You really need all the energy and enthusiasm you can get. Watch any good launch video and you will never see the speaker sitting. Because that's just wasted energy.

So just stand during all your shooting. It will give you a stronger base from which to project that energy.

Green screen considerations

It's not the purpose of this module to explain how to shoot Green screen. We actually have an entire program on this, and as a member of this course, you have full access.

I'll just say that you need to give your arms enough room to move freely. If your lights in the background intrude too much because you are in a small space, you should make the necessary adjustments to either shoot in a larger space or reduce the size of your image on the screen, such that we can't see your hands.



Here's how to cut out the parts of your background that you don't want seen.

Element 2: The Jump Cut



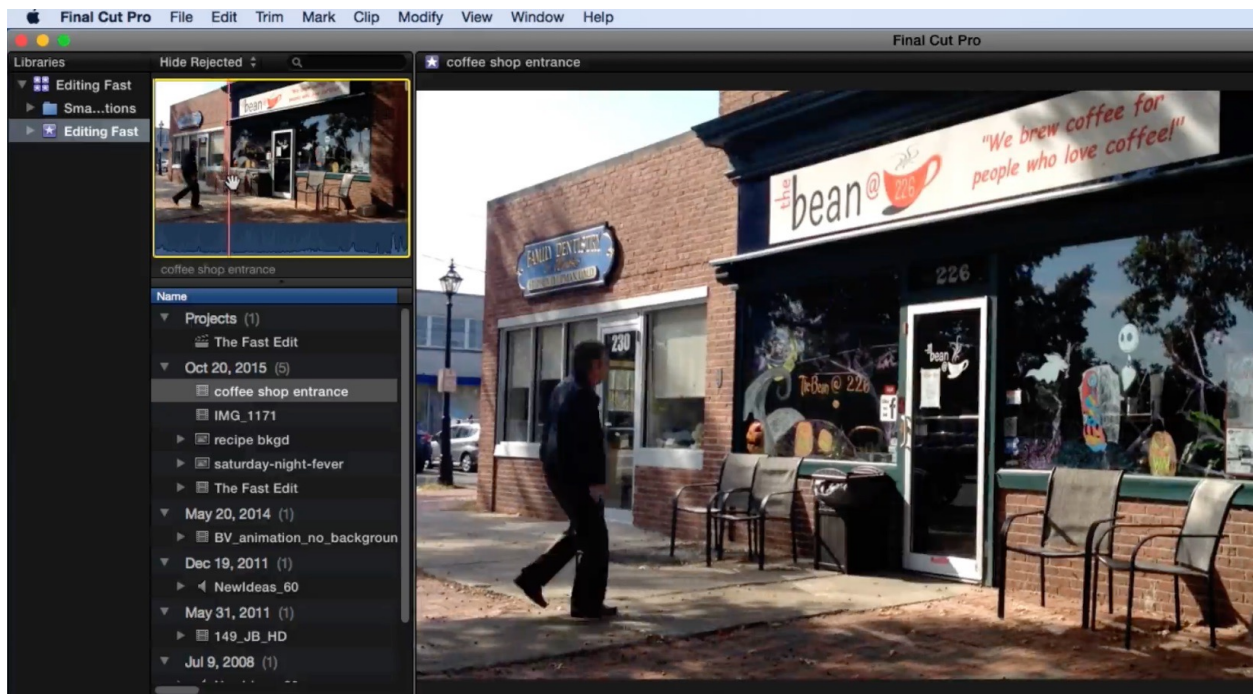
[Click here](#) to see how that works in Final Cut Pro, knowing that other systems will handle it in a similar way.

As you can see, this makes the task of hiding your jump cuts super-fast and simple. Remember, the rules of composition still apply.

And here are a few extra tips:

- ▶ Try not to keep your subject in the same relative place on the screen. If the close-up is in the center, then consider making the long shot to one side of the screen, and add text or graphics to fill the empty space.
- ▶ Don't blow up your close-up beyond where it looks almost as crisp as the long shot.
- ▶ Don't cut randomly. Cut in places where the cut makes sense from a content standpoint. This way, you can use the jump cut to place emphasis on certain places in the script. What this means is that your jump cuts don't have to simply hide discontinuities. They can also reinforce script ideas.
- ▶ If you come to a place where the cut would be random, then don't cut. Cover. What this means is that you simply use a graphic in place of yourself. Simply drop the graphic over your own track. This keeps your audio alive, but covers your video until you get to a point where you can cut back to yourself onscreen.

Element 3: B-Roll



B-Roll is footage acquired on location, like shots of you on stage speaking, walking down the street, talking with a small group, in meetings with your staff, at play, working with clients; etc.

These shots support the points you are making by showing that what you are saying is true. So think of the bet b-roll as demonstration. And quite frankly, demonstration is far more powerful than testimonials. The reason is that a demonstration proves you can help your potential customer more than anything.

And just as a side note, getting b-roll is probably the most fun you'll ever have with your camera. There's just something about being on location with your friends and colleagues that makes the whole experience feel like you're making a movie.

One of the things that makes getting b-roll less stressful is that you don't also have to pick up good audio. The audio will come from your studio shots, which become voice-overs when you drop the b-roll into place over the studio shots.

Quite frankly, using b-roll could take your launch videos to a whole new level. Most ordinary launch videos still do not use b-roll. That seems to be a luxury known only to

the big marketers. I guess it's because they have the budgets to hire videographers to shoot extra footage outside the studio.

But if you are shooting this all yourself, you might want to consider shooting b-roll. While it does take a lot longer to shoot, I think it's worth it, especially if you have more time available than money.

B-roll will make your launch videos way more fun to watch, and that should translate directly into sales. After all, if no one watches your videos, you're not going to sell anything.

I'm not saying you need to use b-roll for your launch videos. Hardly anyone does. I am saying that at this moment in history, it could very well be a competitive advantage.

If you do choose to get b-roll, please keep these pointers in mind.

How much b-roll should you shoot?

Remember, you've got almost 80 minutes of video to support. And between changing shot sizes, using on-screen text, bringing on still graphics and adding b-roll, you need to make a change on the screen every 8 seconds or so. That means having something new happen 8 times per minute. Over 80 minutes, that's 640 separate events.

So let's do the math and see exactly how much b-roll we need.

At least once per minute we can add text. If the text moves, we can count it twice.

At least once per minute we can change the shot size.

At least once per minute we can add a still graphic.

That leaves 4 times per minute where we still have to make a change. If we use 8 seconds as a base for triggering changes, then that means we need 32 seconds of b-roll.

Now, the great thing about b-roll is that the changes are all internal to the shot. In other words, your b-roll contains all the changes you'll need and more to sustain interest. That means that one shot of b-roll can do the work of 4 other kinds of on-screen change.

See why the big marketers like it so much?

But now let's look at the real world. The truth is, you'll find yourself using more and more text, so that will cut down on the amount of b-roll you'll need. You'll also be using more still graphics, pie charts, screen shots and animations, so again, this will cut down on the amount of b-roll needed.

So if you shoot enough b-roll to sustain 80 minutes of video, that will require roughly 50 shots. So how long will it take to get 50 shots?

First of all there is the location factor. That includes transportation, time on location and scheduling everyone's time. If you are able to consolidate shots by making one location look like 5, then you can probably get up to 10 usable shots per location.

So that's 5 locations total, right? Right. But don't expect to get to all your locations in a single day. I usually budget 3 days to get everything. Three days means you won't be rushed into accepting sub-par footage and you can take time to review it on site to make sure you got it.

What's the best camera to use to get your b-roll?

Almost any camera you have laying around will do. I've used the iPhone, the Canon HV-30 and the Sony AX-100, and all will do the job.

A DSLR is also great if you can keep control over the focus. I find them too finicky to use for the run-and-gun nature of getting b-roll, but if you have a photography background, you might be OK with it.

Just make sure you have enough memory cards and/or tape and/or storage to accommodate all the footage you get.

I like to bring a laptop when using the iPhone and AX-100 so that I can offload a full memory card and keep shooting if I still have daylight.

So the big question is, can you afford the 3 days? That's up to you, but personally I think it's a little crazy not to take them. Creating marketing content that is less perishable is almost always a good idea. It gives that series staying power which means it can become part of an automated funnel bringing in sales daily, rather than a one-time launch where you don't have the time to tweak the other elements before the launch is over.

Element 4: On-Screen Text

On-screen text clarifies and reinforces your script points. In a launch series, text might just save your life if you don't have the time or inclination to acquire b-roll.

Think about our previous calculations. We need things to change on the timeline every 8 seconds or so. That means we need 8 separate changes per minute. If we change the shot size once, that means we still need 7 more changes. Now, it may not even be possible to add 7 instances of text in a minute, but you don't have to.

Remember that adding motion to your text decreases the need for change by one instance. Each piece of moving text is worth at least 2 changes, so your minute of screen time could consist of one shot size change and 3 instances of moving text. That would give you your 8 changes. Why 8 and not 7? Because one of those sets of moving text is almost guaranteed to be good for 3 changes rather than 2.

So can you see now that the way your text moves in and out is incredibly important?

Text as a motion graphic

I hope you can see how moving your text rather than just popping it in is going to increase the staying power of your videos. But the question is, how do you move that text?

Editing programs give you a dizzying array of possibilities for movement. You can do anything from slamming on the text like an earthquake, complete with smoke and fire, to the subtle qualities of a phrase that blurs into focus, then blurs out again.

Which should you use for your videos? Since I don't know your product, I'm going to recommend something I do a lot. And that's to bring the text on with a subtle expansion.

Either by using a plug-in which allows you to do this very quickly (such as 4D Alex Smooth Move for Final Cut Pro), or by using simple key frames in your motion panel, you can bring your text on from small to large.

Here's a simple but elegant recipe:

Using a dissolve transition at the beginning of the clip that spans 30 frames, add a key frame at the beginning of the clip that brings the clip to 80% of its full size.

Then add another key frame where you want to the clip to have completed its expansion to 100% of its size.

Where you place this key frame is incredibly important because you have a lot of choices based on the content of the text.

If you want to time the ending of the moment where the text finishes moving into place, place the key frame above the spoken word that key represents (Key is a fancy video term for on-screen text.)

Then there is the question of energy. If you want to make a forceful point, you can bring the key in more quickly. If you want your point to be more thoughtful, you can bring the key in more slowly. In any case, don't go too slow, or the point of text movement could be lost, which is to maintain visual interest. Use 4 seconds as the outside limit.

Another choice is to keep growing the text all the way through its appearance, so that the text seems to keep growing even as it is now disappearing. This is a good effect for a key that won't be on screen for very long. But it's also a stylistic choice, so if you aren't using this for a lot of your keys, I wouldn't use it for any of them.

The way the key moves is also important. Your key frames should all be Bezier key frames. This means that the key will start fast and slow down as it comes to its final position on the screen. It's hard to understand this without seeing it, so...



Take a look at the difference

between these two instances of on-screen movement of text.

No matter how fast or slow the text comes on, always make sure your key frames are of the "start-fast-end-slow" type. It takes your production values up by big bunches.

Justification

Whenever a piece of text floats onto the screen, it does so with a certain justification style. I recommend you use “centered”, because if you use anything else, the text will start appearing on the screen in one spot, then stop in a completely different spot and there’s nothing you can do about that.

But if you choose “centered” the font will appear and settle in all in the same spot.

Fonts

Use non-serif fonts. Arial, Helvetica, Avenir and even Impact can be used. If you’d like to see some of these in action...



[Check out this simple video.](#) It mentions using a serif font called Georgia, but for your launch videos, keep it non-serif, except for maybe major titles.

Font weight

Your text will have some kind of width to it. If you’re doing the classical internet marketing thing with strong fonts and cheesy effects, then it might be very thick indeed. If you’re promoting something in a more refined way, your text is likely to be much thinner.

Take caution that you don’t make it too thin, though. Video can make mincemeat out of thin fonts, and if the font weight isn’t heavy enough, the words could break up or look jaggy.

Usually a good compromise is to choose a font that has a “Roman” variant. This is thin enough to look elegant and subtle, and wide enough to be easily seen on any screen without breaking up.

Where your text goes on the screen

This is not the slam-dunk it appears to be. We actually have to deal with two separate rules, then meld them together somehow to make the text looks like it belongs there and supports rather than detracts from the speaker it is sharing the screen with.

Rule #1: The Irregular Object Factor

When laying out objects on a screen, you try to balance the weight of each area of the screen. With columns of text or graphics, this is relatively easy. Just make sure the right half of the screen doesn't have all the objects in it. Kind of keep it half and half.

But what do you do when the object that takes up an entire half of the screen is irregular, like maybe a person? Now the issue becomes a little more complicated. The answer is to go as low-tech as possible, because all you have to rely on is your eye.



And here's how it's done. Say you want to be on the left side of the screen with some text on the right side, like this:

Rule #2: The Family Factor

Here we want the text to be associated with you. So while the screen needs to be balanced, the text needs to also look like it is part of what you're talking about.

The usual way of making sure this works is by un-squinting, then moving the text upwards on the screen a little bit until it appears somewhere in the shoulder area.

Text can be an incredibly efficient way of clarifying your concepts. You can take your text treatment to a whole new level by paying close attention to your choice of fonts, font weight, justification, motion and composition.

Yes, there's a lot to using fonts, but they are incredibly important to your launch videos, especially if you don't have a lot of extra time to shoot b-roll. So take good care of your text and it will reward you at the box office!

Element 5: Still Images



First of all, know that all the rules about bringing in text apply to still graphics.

The rule about how many stills to use also applies. Basically, if you are going to rely primarily on still images, then you'll need a lot of them. You'll need to have at least one image every minute.

This won't be the rule if you have plenty of other ways of changing the screen; only if graphics are your primary method.

What kind of graphics can you use in your launch videos?

The main rule when it comes to choosing graphics is "The Recognition Factor".

Your audience has to understand what the graphic means and what concept it's supporting. And they have to understand it right away. You don't want them guessing

or trying to figure it out while you're talking. That kind of defeats the whole purpose of the graphic.

The graphic is there to explain, to support or even add entertainment value to the video. It also provides one of those much-needed changes every few seconds so things don't get too stale.

Where do graphics go?

You can set them beside yourself or use them full-screen. They're also a great way to cover a discontinuity in your live video sequence. If you set them beside yourself, just use the rules of composition as explained above in the text section.

How should your graphics make their appearance?

Many people just bang them in instantly. I don't care for that. It tells me the producer was pretty thoughtless about the whole thing. And it makes we wonder "what else are they going to be thoughtless about?"

So I would bring in your graphics with the same care as you did your text, as explained above.

Where can you find a cheap source of graphics?

If you're using a lot of them, it could get kind of expensive. If you're going to post any of your launch videos on YouTube (never a good idea) then you'll need to be extra-sensitive to legal restrictions on the use of images you find around the internet.

To avoid problems, use some of the many sites that archive millions of images for cheap or even free usage.

Here are some that members of our Inner Circle have found to be of value, and you might as well:

[presentermedia](#)

[shutterstock](#)

[123rf.com](#)

[istockphoto](#)

[fotolia.com](#)

[unsplash.com](#)

[morguefile.com](#)

[deathtothestockphoto.com](#)

picjumbo.com
lifeofpix.com

One of my favorites is 123rf.com. They have millions of images, and most can be had for around \$1.

On many of these sites you will find images in various sizes. Usually you can use the smallest size available at 123rf.com. That's about 400px wide, plenty for an image that appears next to you.

For a full screen image, you can usually get by with only the next size up, around 800px wide. That's because these images tend to hold up when blown up to almost 300%.

How to search for graphics

Think of your graphics search as the Davinci Code. You might think you're looking for one thing, but the site will interpret your input in the strangest ways.

I like to start by taking the temperature of the site; seeing how they interpret any given concept. Then I can take off from there.

Let's say you want to look for a graphic that supports the idea of "Video Graphics".

The first thing is to type in "Video Graphics" in the search bar, so you can see what the site thinks about your idea.

So you get mostly images of computer graphics cards and icons of computer graphics cards. Clearly that's not what I want. How do I make the site deliver what I'm really after?

Well, what am I really after anyway? I want to get across the idea that still images can be used in a video. That's probably not something the site is going to help me with, is it?

So let's take a less direct approach.

In this case, I just want to introduce the idea of video graphics as a concept. So I start thinking about what that really is. Well, it's basically just a still image on a video screen.

So I try this now: "image on video". And again, all I get are icons of the word "Video".

Hm. Clearly I need to get more basic. So I type in “tv screen”. Basically I’ve now decided to grab two images; one of a TV monitor and one of a more or less random image to put in it.

Typing in “tv screen” pulls up a ton of perfectly rendered monitors with blank screens, ready for me to put my image inside. Cool.

And since everyone likes looking at images of smiling people, I type in “happy woman” and about a million images come up. So I just buy them, open them in Photoshop, paste the woman inside the monitor, squeeze it down to size, and now my image is ready.

As you can see, the more specific the image you are looking for, the less time it will take to find it. What I just explained was how to narrow a vague concept down to something manageable. It’s far better to be clear on the front end. You’ll save a lot of time searching.

Element 6: The Animated Opening and Closing



Every launch video series needs an animated opening. The more professional-looking the better. This animated opening should go on the beginning and ending of each of your pieces of pre-launch content.

What's in the opening?

Basically, the animated opening is a logo treatment. Somehow your logo is brought on-screen. The style you choose is completely subjective, but there are a few guidelines to go by.

Time

Try to stay under 10 seconds. Any more than that and it starts seeming a little over the top. Much shorter than that and it may not seem very substantial. I would use a minimum of 5 seconds.

Style

It doesn't matter as long as it is consistent with your brand. If you're laid back, don't get crazy. If you're crazy, don't get laid back. Keep everything according to audience expectations. We're trying to make an impression of who we are and what we represent. Don't sacrifice that for style.

Where can you get animated intros?

Today you no longer have to make these yourself. There are so many After Effects templates and motion graphic technicians who love doing this stuff out of Fiverr, you can probably get something reasonable done for about \$25.

For the DIY folks, you probably already know you can find themes at VideoBlocks and Theme Forest, so I won't belabor the point.

Element 7: Music

Music is last in the list, because not everyone uses it. I think that's a crazy mistake for a launch video. Part of the appeal of video is the imaginative worlds it can create, and music can be the single most evocative element of your video.

A good piece of music supporting your message can actually make it resonant far more than having no music at all. Imagine Raiders of the Lost Ark without the John Williams score. Or Star Wars. Name your favorite movie. It's likely that you recall the music as easily as the story.

Of course, one of the most basic and troubling difficulties people face is how to choose music in the first place. So let's get this out of the way right off the bat. [Here's a video](#) that is as relevant as it was when it was first made.



So now that the matter of selection is out of the way, let's look at the best way to use music in your videos.

How much music?

I think you should have a LOT of music. Unless you're teaching highly technical topics, (and that would be a mistake in a launch series) where a music bed would impede

learning, then you should have it wall to wall. Anytime you don't have it in a piece, it should be for a very definite reason. And that reason should be to make a very strong point. Then it should start right back up again.

I usually start the music after the first sentence of the video. That lets my audience know that there's a real show in store. It creates anticipation and enjoyment. It's a good way to start.

When do you change the music?

Every time there is a major change in topic, or a change in mood, it's also time to change the music. This is pretty common-sense stuff. For a sad story, the music can be slower and in a minor key. For a success story the beat can get faster and the music more driving.

For a 20 minute video you're going to want to change the music approximately 8 times. But that doesn't mean having 8 separate pieces of music. You'll probably have 4 or 5, then repeat them at various intervals.

What's the right level for music?

We could get into EQ levels for various frequencies so that the human voice is better complimented by the music, but for the sake of simplicity, just start your music levels at between -8 and -16db. If you keep your vocal levels at 0db or above, then you should be fine. The music will not overpower the voice, but it will still be easily heard.

Your combined volume with music and voice should peak at right around -6db, leaving some "headroom" for louder passages.

How do you play music in your video?

How the music starts and stops is also important. Never, ever, ever, ever stop a piece of music abruptly so that the voice can start speaking.

Instead, do it this way:

Play the music. When the voice starts, do a "duck under" of the music track. That means you see the waveform of the person speaking right over the waveform of the music. Let them both be at their current level.

Then after less than a second, drop the level of the music down from 8 – 16db. Keep it there for the rest of the track.

This way, the music plays and sounds intentional and person speaking is easily audible.



Here's a video that shows you exactly how to do just that.

Where do you find music?

If you're a member of the Video Brain Trust, you already have access to 100 tracks that are royalty-free.

And here are some other sites that have high-quality music:

Digital Juice – Their StackTraxx collection is very diverse. I have used their music for years. The collection is available by subscription.

<http://www.digitaljuice.com/>

The Music Bakery - a bit pricey, but very good tracks and easily searchable

<http://musicbakery.com>

Sonicfire Pro – The best of the best. Their music is completely time-able. It's also one of the pricier alternatives.

<http://www.smartsound.com/sonicfire>

Audio Blocks – One of the better bargains in music today. At \$99/yr, you get a large selection of styles and tunes. I think they update their music pretty well, as they always seem to have something that sounds current.

<https://www.audioblocks.com>

Free Stock Music – There might be one or two gems on this completely free site.

<http://www.freestockmusic.com/>

Final Words...

Editing your launch videos should always be a very rewarding experience. Of course the first time it will be emotionally daunting. It's something new for you. There's just no getting around it.

But if you use the principles and practices I have described in this brief manual, you won't have to redo them, you'll be proud of the way they look, and your video's effectiveness will actually surpass most of the launch videos being produced today.

If you have any questions about this content, feel free to ask them in the Editing section of the [Greenroom](#), our 24/7 forum for all things video marketing and production.

HAPPY EDITING!