



Wedding Videography 101

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Chapter 1 – Why Are Wedding Videos So In-Demand

Photos are one thing, but videos bring their own singular magic to an event. The simplest most ridiculous explanation you can give why you need video coverage on your wedding day is because you can watch the event in motion than just have snapshots to recall memories from. Sounds, sights, and moments are caught in stark reality, giving you a lot to remember indeed.

In just the last few years alone the art of video making has seen immense strides forward, what with fresh new software, technology, techniques and methods. It used to be the case that videos made what people those days were recording look so bad that it was far more satiating to have photos instead.

With HD (High Definition) technology and equipment that can do more to make videos seem like movies, this is not the case anymore. Showcasing all the beauty, charm, flow, presence and style of a wedding, especially the bride in her enchanting gown, a video these days speak a thousand more words than a photo. This single spell is more than sufficient to render videos a must-have feature at weddings.

So much emotion and once-in-a-lifetime moments are stored in video form. It's often the case that some of the most memorable wedding photos are taken using software that shoots a photo of a moment in a video. Wedding videos have evolved into wedding *films* that stand the test of time.

From new stabilization equipment and not to mention lenses and cameras you can today make a wedding video that does more justice than any other mode of memory-capture. You'll learn more about such progressive equipment in 'Chapter 3: The Ideal Film Equipment'.

Granted, videography will take a large bite out of your wedding budget, but it's worth every cent. If you know someone who married during the 80's you'll learn just how bad wedding videos were then—no offense intended. It was just as expensive, relatively speaking, to hire a videographer those days and they used to try and cut corners, implement shortcuts and whatever other trick they had up their sleeves to save you costs so you can somehow get your hands on a video that will impress your family and friends.

However, if you've seen some of those videos you'll understand how such an 'Uncle Charlie' approach can turn nightmarish. So much is out of focus, colors merge in unappealing ways and there's none of the magical clarity you can enjoy this millennium.

There's this notion that it's alright to hire a friend to cover the wedding using a video camera. As charming as that idea is, and chances are that video really does turn out okay, a professional videographer is a far better bet.

Not only do they know their thing, they also have what it takes to use technical skills honed over time. Amateur videos have an annoying tendency to go on for too long or get cut short too soon. A professional will know ways to capture adequate quantities of footage and edit them using competent software, getting you a video that flows like a movie and is worth watching like one.

There's the added responsibility why wedding video-makers should also focus on audio, because sometimes a bunch of really amazing videos are shot but the audio is a total disappointment. You'll learn more about this in 'Chapter 2: The Power Of Audio'.

From shakiness and lack of clarity to corny captures and indistinct audio moments, these and more are what you'll face if an amateur is behind the lens. No offense to your friend or relative volunteering their videographic skills, but your wedding is special and needs a professional's touch—certainly they'll understand.

Besides, as you'll come to know in later chapters, video film is a special addition to the mix, something professionals use and not rookies. This means your wedding day video will be clear and viewable many years down the line, even decades later. Otherwise it's prone to all sorts of damage and wear and when the time comes and you feel like reliving memories nothing much will be there to relive.

This isn't meant to scare you, rather educate you on making the right choice where videography is concerned. After all, a wedding is one of the most important events in a woman's life and she can't have anything—repeat, *anything*—ruin it.

Editing and compiling are yet another skill-set professional videographers know to handle. This is what makes all the difference, adding to the reasons you should get a professional with smart equipment and not just someone with a camcorder. Funny how there are so called 'professionals' out there who buy a single camcorder and say they're in business.

Avoid moments when you may be tempted to say 'If only I could do it all over again...' A wedding videographer will save you heartaches where covering your special day is concerned. They make it seem easy but work using a lot of factors to get you that ideal length of film. Most of those factors depending on practiced skill. Your investment in hiring their services will be well worth it in the end.

One-dimensional pictures (also called photographs) are great, they can be framed, stand as reminders of more beautiful days and come in mighty handy when the newlyweds go through tough times in life. Videos, on the other hand, have similar effects but pack their own version of emotion.

As mentioned earlier, the 1980's were the decade when we saw the advent of videography as a mainstream recording source. Being new on the block and continuing into the 1990's videography remained at an average or poor level and video quality wasn't good at all compared to what can be accomplished today.

Obviously, this started to affect customers looking to hire someone to cover weddings and other events. Considering the low quality and lack of discipline then, you can imagine how circumstances would have turned out for all those involved.

A magnificent evolution has taken place since, transforming the very nature of the videography field and making it one of the most sought-after million-dollar industries today. Weddings are, in essence, family documentaries more than a mere video gig and professionals keep that thought in mind these days, polishing their skills and bringing them to bear on such a grand and important event.

There are those who will say you'll never take time off to watch these videos, they'll probably gather dust somewhere in the loft or it's going to be viewed during anniversaries alone. However, that's just *one* option not the norm. Chances are you made the right choice hiring a capable videographer to cover the wedding and they did such an awesome job that you and your beloved, not to mention family, friends and, later on, kids will enjoy reliving the moment time after time.

There's a special kind of something when you see videos of the newlyweds share a romantic kiss while holding each other close. There's the priceless significance filled with emotion when a video covers the father-daughter dance and that truly iconic moment when the beautiful bride appears at the start of the aisle and embarks on her soft march, breaking into the official first minutes of a huge life-decision.

These are things videos capture better than photographs because not a second is lost and every emotion available is packed into the record, ready to be relived and cherished any time afterwards.

Different aspects issue out of wedding photography and wedding videography. A professional videographer will know to catch that moment seconds before it takes place. From the guests, family friends and relatives, a video is sure to involve them all in one sweep, displaying their emotional input of the moment and imparting to the video something to laugh about, cry about, admire and think about, not to forget remember on a deep level.

Chapter 2 – The Power Of Audio

Audio Equipment

There are too many wedding videos that look stellar but have terrible audio to the point that people looking at the video lose interest in it. As a wedding videographer you need to know the importance of audio and how to go about understanding it before implementing what you know.

The key is to get the microphone close enough to the scene you're recording. A camcorder has a built-in stereo mic but the left and right audio tracks record varying signals. A mono audio source is the safer option, but you need to have one to the camera's left channel and another to the camera's right. This makes it certain you can capture clear audio.

If you can afford a stereo microphone or two-mic array, well and good. However, keep in mind that stereo isn't an absolute necessity in your wedding video. As mentioned earlier, if you can get close enough without being an interruption you will have yourself ideal sound.

The 3-pin XLR is the most commonly found one on professional video equipment. For enhanced resistance to noise pickup go for Balanced XLR audio cables. These run to about 12 feet sometimes, so you get distance as well as good sound reception. A 1/4-inch phono plug is another option, and these offer you two selections: mono (tip and sleeve) and stereo (tip-ring-sleeve).

RCA connectors are the ones you often find on the back of your stereo but these are almost always unsteady and prone to pick up noise over the course of being used. 'Male' or 'female' connectors of all sorts are sold by trusted brands like Radio Shack and Markertek who sell varied adapters in one package for a total of about \$50.

Suppose a mono source to both the right and left channels is your preference, you'll need adapters to help get it connected. The XLR to 1/8" converter boxes are great choices. You can purchase them from companies like Studio One Productions and Beachtek. With two inputs as well as the presence of level controls they double as a mixer for your ease of use.

While it's recommended you get professional equipment to videograph a wedding, you may sometimes make recourse to handycam-style camcorders. With such hardware, it's recommended you use a stereo (tip-ring-sleeve) 1/8-inch audio plug which you will then need to mate to an XLR mic using an adapter plug. Depending on the model of your choice, wireless receivers can come into play. Remember that XLR connectors ensure physical integrity but don't necessarily offer marked technical benefits.

Camcorders like Sony VX-2000, -2100 have a tendency to shut off their built-in mics when you attach a plug to an external mic jack. Then again, there are camcorders that permit the use of a camera mic as well as an external unit. It all boils down to your preferences as the person behind the lens.

Wireless receivers and shotguns play the role of dual external mics using which you can go about recording clear audio. Connections for such a setup include adapters of the XLR type or you can go for dual mono to stereo "Y" adapters of the 1/8-inch type.

Other Gear

Your wedding videography gear should be competent, up to date and preferably somewhat new because the older such hardware gets the crankier it becomes. Wireless mic rigs and shotguns are quite valuable to your work. They're sold by many major companies, some of them being Azden, Sennheiser, Sony and Audio-Technica.

Backup is essential, as you can easily imagine. Get yourself a mini-disc recorder, along with a converter box (if needed). Wireless transmitters are great for fixing on the groom or officiant to help get you some clear audio. Some churches ask you refrain from using wireless transmitters because it might come in the way of the church's sound systems. In this case MD units are ideal. However, be sure you get microphone input jacks for these pieces of hardware because some of them don't come with it.

Certainly you may have need to interview important guests at the wedding. This means you will have need of a handheld mic with a plug-on transmitter. As you can imagine, mics apparently have a lot of importance in your audio clarity levels. If you plan on getting yourself more than one wireless mic, see that they're on different frequencies because a sole receiver can't access two different wireless signals that have the same frequency rate.

There is a range of mic varieties for you to consider:

1. Cardioid – This mic utilizes a nice wide area in front of the mic element to record audio, rendering the area behind it not so keen. It's great for guest interviews.
2. Omnidirectional – Recording sound from all directions, this mic is one of the most favored by videographers, but tags along some risks of its own like sound distortion.
3. Shotgun – This mic-type focuses on picking up sound in a narrow cone about the axis it stands on. It does a great job of cutting out unnecessary sound.
4. Condenser – This one has a capacitor with two charged plates that leave a space between them. This spacing varies with the sound waves entering it. This alters the capacitance and produces an electrical signal of diverse intensities. It will need a battery or phantom power to operate, which is basically power sent to this mic, usually about 48V DC, from the equipment connected to it, be it a camcorder or mixer.
5. Dynamic – Small coils attached to a diaphragm make up this mic-type. Sound waves move the diaphragm, with the coils moving in a magnetic field and producing an electrical signal.

There's a lot more to be gleaned about mics. A little patience and practice will help get you enhanced knowledge.

General Audio-Taking Guide

Different moments in a wedding need different audio setups to gather the sound needed. As mentioned earlier, putting a wireless input on the officiant or groom is a great idea because they're pretty close to all the most important wedding moments. For instance, the groom's tuxedo offers you ample chances to fix up a mic and keep it hidden while also gaining access to some wonderful audio footage where vow exchanges and other official proceedings are concerned. The microphone packs go in the jacket pocket or under the cummerbund and so on, something the bride's gown can't manage to carry without look odd.

Get yourself a schedule of the wedding's events. It will help you set up audio equipment in all the right places and get yourself good coverage where needed. Mic-ing the room is a great idea because you get audience reaction to the wedding, from general emotional coos to the sound of a united stand-up when the bride makes her entry at the start of the aisle. From the laughter to the applause, it will all be useful footage during the editing stage.

Sometimes, it's a smart idea to take a feed from the church's sound system. If it's competent enough—no offense intended—you can get all the audio you need to work with, from poetry readings, prayers and vows to the music and religious terms used while making it official.

The wedding venue is a whole other location, so be sure to check it out in advance. This way you know if the place will suit your gear and its capabilities. Merely plugging into the 'tape out' jacks won't help get you ideal audio.

Most sound systems have output signals that occur at line level while camera input is at microphone level. Overloading and/or distortion can occur if you simply plug in and go. Mixers manually mounted on your camera often help, with the use of adapters, to get distortion issues resolved at the line and mic levels. Also coming with volume controls means you get to fine-tune the signal level.

The number of cameras you're working with matters. Set up one camera to a wireless mic and another to the room mics, if two cameras are your choice. When three cameras enter the game, you'll need to know how audio signals are linked to each and, with that information, cable and sync accordingly.

In this manner, there are plenty of rather technical details you need to be prepared to face. This does indeed make a professional's work far more refined than a rookie videographer's. Besides, having good audio skills in this regard makes all the difference between a great wedding video and a disappointing one.

Chapter 3 – The Ideal Film Equipment

What You Need To Have

A wedding can be very profitable if you do what it takes to get there. Acquiring the proper wedding video/film equipment is absolutely essential. This is your key to becoming an ace videographer. Suppose you have all the stuff you need. Forgetting an integral piece of equipment on the wedding day can be a rather degrading affair. It reflects on your professionalism and you as a person, when you unintentionally display carelessness on your client's important day. Make certain to bring everything required with you.

Batteries: The time you're going to spend out there on the field certainly begs the importance of batteries. Advantages are your shooting time is considerably increased, despite the elevated cost of spare batteries. Take a few more spare batteries than you feel you might need. Remember that it's okay to eject nearly empty batteries and replace them with fresh ones because the last thing you need is to fidget to change your camera-batteries during a very important moment.

Camcorder/High-end Video Camera: This is a rather obvious addition to the lineup. Whereas a home-use camcorder is great for a lot of reasons, professional video cameras are a far better bet. Besides, it's way more reassuring to see the wedding videographer holding a competent piece of hardware than a camcorder. With HD (High Definition) capabilities, a long battery life and great audio features, you can't go wrong with this addition.

Media: This includes the broad range of additional components you need to take with you to shoot a great wedding video. Such media, of course, depends on the type of camera/camcorder you have decided on using. From SD cards and DVDs to MiniDV tapes, be sure you take the needful. That lattermost media-component can hold longer videos, making it a favorite among professionals. If you have a camcorder equipped with an internal hard drive, you may have no need to rely on external media take-alongs (learn more in 'Accessories' section below).

Lens Wipes: Cleaning wipes for microfiber lenses are a must-have for any wedding videographer. From fingerprints (even if they're not your own) to general dust and dirt that may have accumulated, not to forget rain drops or other sprinkled-by-mistake liquids, these wipes will help get you back on track in no time and keep you from recording a blurry video.

Tripod: No more jerky wedding videos. Tripods make that possible. A monopod is good, but three legs are better than one. A quality tripod should be both stable and light-weight. This makes it easy to carry around and set up quick. Check in advance if your camera/camcorder rests steady on top of the tripod lest the stand gets too top-heavy and 'faints'.

Camera Bag: With the number of delicate (and other) things you will most certainly need to carry around with you, a camera bag is more than absolute. With smart-design pouches and slots you can

keep all sorts of video-making items in their designated locations and carry them about without fear of losing them. Getting them out in a jiffy will be the next easy thing you can look forward to (learn more in 'Bags For Perfection' section below).

The Allure Of Good Lighting

When it comes down to lighting, there are a lot of technical specifications that need a videographer's attention. The wedding schedule, ambiance, theme, events and such are all someone else's responsibility. However, it is your duty to capture the wedding in an authentic light, so to speak.

Lighting is a key ingredient in all great wedding videos. Video cameras that come equipped to handle low light make for one of the most in-demand hardware out there. It may not always be necessary for a videographer to set up lighting equipment, but in those times when it's an absolute must it turns into something pretty valuable. For instance, when the bride and groom are at the reception, greeting family, friends and well wishers, that's one of a handful of times when lighting becomes a necessity.

One of the first things you have to check is whether you have an on-camera light in your equipment kit. A good example of a bright light source is something like the Switronix TorchLED with its superb light fallout. Granted, it may be over-luminous for a wedding occasion but there are moments when such intensity is welcome. It probably comes with a dimmer switch you can alter the brightness using. The key reason so many videographers opt for LED lights is because they possess changeable color temperature (from 3000 to 6000K for the product mentioned above). This means you can alter the intensity to suit the ambient light, making it easier to get the clearest wedding videos that also make editing work simpler.

For those of you looking for a more 'first timer' piece of lighting, check out what Bescor have in stock. Vidpro and Genaray are other superb brands to explore and seek out your videographic lighting needs. For instance, the Genaray LED-2100 36 LED Compact On-Camera Light tags along features like a 40W equivalent light intensity system, a built-in diffuser and an integrated shoe mount & 1/4-inch thread, to name three of its many features. On a similar note, you have Vidpro's practical Professional Photo & Video LED Light Kit with a 3200K tungsten filter, magnetic mounting system and adjustable hot-shoe/tripod mount, to name three of its others features.

For more high-end lighting systems, go for what Litepanels and another company by the name of Bebob Engineering have to offer.

If you make all the right moves, like confirming your lighting decisions with your client and/or hiring an assistant to help with periodic adjustments, you sure can make an impression on everyone at the wedding. Keep your lighting moderate, though, because nobody likes a continuous barrage of brightness glinting off them all day.

Accessories

Backup media and long-lasting batteries, including spares, are essential accessories to carry with you. Since an outline of this has already been covered above, take a look at some products for you to try out. NP-F770 L-Series Info-Lithium Battery Pack (7.2v, 4400mAh) from Sony is a smart on-camera battery choice while battery mounting plates like Switronix's Dual P-Tap V-Mount Plate for Blackmagic Cinema Camera is a cool buy.

Though it's a bit old-fashioned, battery belts and packs are pretty useful. Since you have a camera bag, this isn't compulsory. Battery adapter cables are invaluable, like Zacuto's 18-inch Right Angle D-Tap Power Cable for Blackmagic Cinema Camera and VariZoom's S7101 4-Pin XLR to D-Tap Adapter Cable.

Of course, there are plenty more where these came from and your aim should be to choose the ones that have features compatible with the rest of your gear/equipment. Battery testers are great for emergencies, but it's best you avoid such emergencies by getting yourself great batteries to begin with.

As far as media components are involved, always opt for memory cards and data storage media that have enhanced security, virus protection and good encryption. These come in handy in myriad ways.

Power-related accessories include adapter cables like Canon's DC-920 DC Coupler and charger supplies like Bescor's ATM-PRU Automatic Universal Charger (12V, 1.5A). If you have really high-end equipment or are covering a very grand wedding, it's wise to have surge protection accessories.

A flashlight, lens/camera cleaning supplies and also a couple of camera stabilizing add-ons are other smart accessories to have at hand, just in case.

Bags For Perfection

To complete your ensemble, check out some nice products where camera bags and cases are concerned. The Pelican range of products is unmatched and is, quite simply, a favorite among videographers.

Items like the 1514 Carry On 1510 Case with Dividers (Black) and 1020 Micro Case (Clear Black) are worth a look. Also give Porta Brace's PB-2700F Hard Case with Foam Interior (Blue) and the Tenba range of bags a shot, like their Roadie II HDSLR/Video Shoulder Bag (Black) and Messenger: Small Photo/Laptop Bag (Chocolate).

Bags like these afford you ample opportunities for safety, security and ease of access, making your work that much easier and super-efficient. It may not seem like much before the wedding day but you will most certainly realize the incalculable importance of camera bags like these (and plenty of other product-choices in this genre) on the bride's special day when all this effort on your part will end in a smile of approval and joy from everyone involved.

Chapter 4 – Knowing Your Video Editing Software

You'll be glad to know so much of Hollywood's own cinematic tools are now open to general videographic use. This means you have access to some of the most sublime video editing tools out there. Since you're essentially telling a story about two people in love and getting married, this will be a great way to craft a wedding video, using a cinema-appeal.

There are editing formulae that help with creating a consistent wedding video. Image and audio are the two foundations of video editing work which, along with tone and pacing (audio), make for a professional approach during the editing phase. That *idea* is your *formula*, in a manner of speaking, using which you can create an ideally balanced wedding video that will flow with artful elegance each time it's viewed.

Do not start editing *all* your footage at once, thinking you know your stuff and that it will save you time. There are plenty of chances you may have missed something important if you go about employing such kamikaze workmanship.

Reviewing and cataloguing are two of the most essential first-steps you can perform. When you catalog footage you make use of pre-printed sheets that line up shots using sequential file names and have reference notes (for those you'd like to append those notes to), making your work immensely efficient.

You can computer-catalog your collection of wedding video frames by indexing shots inside their folders and labeling using file metadata. This 'labeling' idea has different sub-terms you can understand it by: master, establishing, close-up, wide, cutaway, POV, insert, tracking, reaction and so on.

The better your indexing and referencing of key people in the wedding video (especially the bride and groom) the better you can set up the proper sequences and assemble them together into a workable rough-cut. Other editing tricks like fixing, stealing and matching footage (editing jargon, mind you) are easier to apply when you have well-catalogued material.

The timeline feature in your editing software is in play throughout this time. You next start focusing on rough video and rough audio. Go for the video first, checking to see if you have all the right story pieces, the bride's aisle walk, cake cutting, dance, kiss, nuptials and so on. The sequence can then be linear or non-linear, your call. Keep in mind that the order in which they happen will determine how it's received or viewed. For instance if your story begins with the kiss and ends with tying the knot in church and you have a bunch of other important emotional moments in between, that's a story in itself.

The audio is next on your priority list. Whatever sequences you've selected see to it your audio is in sync, easy to make out and enhances the flow instead of being an abrupt entry that confuses the viewer. Remember that your audio choices are plenty. You can either go for the sounds recorded in the video and in that same shot or take sounds from other sections of the wedding video or use popular music and append that into the scenes.

Cuts, tone, timing and transition comprise your next editing phase where more magic is going to happen than anytime else in the snip-and-meld process. What you're doing is telling a story by creating a 'continuity of action'. Basically, you're making a story flow. Such Motivated Edits, as they're called, use sound, time and reaction to superb effect while avoiding mismatched shots and jump-cuts.

When one shot is played after another, those are termed Cuts. When you take elements from both shots and combine them to create a smooth scene-flow, you have what's called a Transition. Emotional shades using light/dark, comedy/drama and so on is the Tone mentioned earlier. The placement, length and timing of clips are called Pacing.

Your editing software won't necessarily come programmed to make use of such knowledge. You, as the editor, should. Additional ideas you can employ are Cross-Dissolves, which display the passage of time, and Cross-Cutting, which adds an element of suspense. Of course, these depend on the type of wedding footage you have at hand.

For a more professional understanding of things, check out the different Cuts—L, straight, match, cross/parallel edit. And the varied range of Transitions—dissolve, fade-in, fade-out, stretch, wipe, slide, page peel, zoom.

Each of those elements adds something to the wedding video, enhancing it where needed and adding to the memorable factor. However, they will need time and effort on your part as the editor, not to forget a more than familiar knowledge on how to use them. Admitted, you can produce a superb wedding video with no need to apply each one of these skills. On the other hand, if you really want the ultimate wedding video allure and appeal, this is the way to go.

For some cool effects think about using Vignettes for getting that classic and quaint look and introducing soft-dark borders. To get rid of unwanted elements and produce that shallow depth of field, use Masks and Mattes through your editing software.

Quite often, interchangeably used tools like color correction and color grading come into play. You can introduce so much emotion through this editing feature whether you use it as a plug-in or stand-alone program. Manipulating contrast, saturation and of course color, you can transform a simple wedding video into an awe-inspiring one. Sepia tones like black and white can also be applied to get that vintage appeal. Outdoor wedding scenes get enhanced and adopt a magical feel once you know how to play with reds and yellows using editing tools. Color grading features are the cherry on the cake, enabling you to alter an ordinary film into an incredible one to see over and over.

Don't forget the importance of lighting. You may have done what it takes to use mounted lighting hardware to capture clear videos, now it's time you touched them up in the software stage using editing features. Flashes, flares and refracted light can all be changed using smart software to edit the wedding video.

Slow motion replay using the invaluable effects of time-mapping is an ideal editing feature you must also consider.

Editing Mistakes To Avoid

There are plenty of obvious, clichéd, silly and downright careless mistakes videographers are known to make during the editing phase. Here are some must-avoid ones.

Flash Frames: Unusual single-frame anomalies present in the video can be considered flash frames. Tough thing is they aren't readily visible, being easily missed, but imparting a sense to the viewer that something just isn't up to par with the video. When you are busy working too fast or re-sequencing clips *while* revising, chances are you end up with this error. Zoom in on each clip in your timelines to see if these little no-gooders are hiding therein.

Bad Audio Mixing & Out-of-Sync Audio: There's voice and then there's music, the two audio components present in your editing session. The voices *are* the story while the music *is* the emotion. While the former determines the storyline and shares the content of the wedding video the latter sets the pace. Too much of one is certain to upset the overall balance and then your viewers will be left confused. It's a smart idea to keep your music levels lower than you generally prefer them to be and then push them up when needed, like between dialogues.

The worst editing-sin of all is an out-of-sync audio. This spoils every drop of fun and memorability, so you should definitely make certain this error stays way out of the wedding video. Modern editing software flags audio sections that have fallen out of sync but they aren't always successful. Such shifts happen often on the timeline, when you're busy working with clips that have diverse audio sample rates or video frame rates.

Jump-Cuts & Match-Frames: When you've omitted or removed a portion of a shot and you've squashed the video together, there's a 'jump' from one scene to a very different one. Such an unnatural leap in storyline is called a Jump-Cut. Match frames are similar in that when two shots, alike in composition, are cut back to back. Inserting a cutaway, or B-roll as it's also called, will resolve these issues. It essentially separates the trouble-shots and gets rid of the problem. If, however, there's a person in both those shots and you have need to cut between them use factors like camera angle/height and size of the subject to compose the shots in a different manner.

Irregular Pacing: As mentioned earlier, music sets the pace in a wedding video. You may have used a specific soundtrack on the music bed, but if it doesn't match the timing of your edits then that's going to spell trouble. Dissolves (also called soft transitions), long shots and slow camera moves could all use a slow-paced melody or song. Whip pans and cuts, quick shots (no fades, mind you) could do with a nice upbeat tune. Select a proper pace and edit your visuals to match and you're all set to create a superb wedding video.

Unwholesome & Tacky Transitions: Also known as Transitious interruptus or incomplete transitions, these occur when a dissolve or other video-transition effect go on for much longer than the outbound video clip's duration. What you have on your hands will be a partial dissolve that jarringly leaps into the next shot in a rather unappealing manner. Extending the outbound shot or shortening the transition are two easy ways to remedy this situation.

Any transition choices that can quite simply be called weird or wacky fall under tacky. Dissolves and cuts are your primary editing features, while anything 'special' you may have in mind needs a bit of extra thought before you add them into the mix. This being a wedding video and not some college project, refrain from using wipes and 3D spins unless absolutely needed.

Ghost Frames: Every transition should complete itself. When an outbound shot in your dissolve jumps onto the next shot prematurely you have what's called a ghost frame just standing there until the incomplete transition phase passes. This cut-inside-the-dissolve is displayed at partial opacity, making it harder for the viewer to understand what it's doing there let alone if it has any significance to begin with. There are other similar issues where dissolving features are involved. The rule of thumb goes... Dissolve *between* the two established inbound and outbound shots and *avoid* introducing embedded edits within your transitions.

Shaky Outs: You usually see this error happening at the end of a video production. As you know, there are different elements present on a graphic slide. When these elements start fading out at differing times you have what's called staggering or shaky outs. Most graphics possess elements on many timeline layers. This makes it easy to unintentionally shake out points in such a way that one of more graphical sections slip over to a point positioned before another section. Making sure all the elements have the same timeline out point is a way to resolve this. Also, try fading out instead. Throw in a black clip on a superior timeline track.

Graphics Errors: These are the most-recorded errors during and after wedding video editing. Using more fonts than required in a single graphic is a bad idea. Hard to read colors are even worse, making the viewer undergo strain and stress to understand what's being conveyed. When you use low contrast hues in your text and background, that's sure to spell a whole new graphics disaster. Shadows falling in multiple angles/directions, large or tiny text, titles that stay on the screen for an infuriatingly long time or, contrarily, make quick entry-exits are all terrible mistakes to have on a wedding video, and you can add typos to that list.

Chapter 5 – Camera Craze

Exploring Vid-Cam Products

It started out with just camcorders but today cameras of diverse types and sizes are taking center stage in the capable hands of wedding videographers. Mirrorless ones, PTZ's, DSLR's and hybrids are some of the most popular camera-types, including of course the good old fashioned camcorder.

There are two major factors that determine a videographer's camera preference. One, they desire to know how aesthetic the images they shoot will appear after recording and, two, there's the notion of workflow logistics to consider. There are others, but these two are good focal-points for the time being.

Workflow is largely dependent on the camera being used but it sure does require time spent by the videographer practicing to get it right. DSLRs have not been very handy in this particular endeavor while others have taken the long route, learning from the most elementary and going forward from there.

Options are aplenty, as you'll learn in this chapter. You can do anything, the sky's the limit and your passion sets the standard. Practice and technical understanding, however, are a must-have.

Let's start with the best of both worlds, namely a camera with a large sensor aesthetic but possessing elements from a traditional camcorder. The Sony NEX-EA50UH is a fine example of this camera-type. This debut piece in Sony's EA series comes equipped to handle cinematic event videography. The APS-C-sized CMOS sensor is a great component. It's what the name EA ('Event' and 'APS-C-sized CMOS sensor') series stands for. The E-mount allows for interchangeable lenses, with a wonderful servo zoom feature in the 18-200mm kit lens. This zoom feature isn't as practical as the powered zoom on fixed-lens camcorders, but it's ideal for this camera-type. The control layout is quite camcorder-style, and you'll appreciate the XLR audio connectors this product also has going for it. It's compatibility with Sony's L-Series batteries and a nice removable flip-up viewfinder adds to its awesomeness.

As traditional hand-held's go, the Panasonic AG-HPX250 camcorder with P2 memory card compatibility is a cool choice. This product is actually a pretty good successor to the camcorder-types (P2-based) that came before. If you're a videographer who has an already set workflow, this one will fuel your style. Its three 1/3-inch MOS sensors, each having 2.2MP, is a splendid addition. This product also enjoys being the first of its genre to have an AVC-Intra 100 recording format, high quality of course, used primarily for Full HD 10-bit 4:2:2 video. Another amazing feature is its 22x optical zoom ratio through a rather practically designed 3.9-86mm f/1.6-3.2 fixed lens. You also get an equivalent component in this regard, namely the 35mm equivalent of 28-616mm. If you've been looking to reduce the strength of banding artifacts, this camcorder's Flash Band Compensation function is highly useful.

A magnificent yet small-scale beauty like the mirrorless Micro Four Thirds Panasonic DMC-GH3 gets you some incredible video quality for a camera that looks like it's meant only for photographic use. Equipped with a capability to record Full HD 1920 x 1080p at 60 frames per second and a broadcast quality video compression function ready to implement ALL-Intra and IPB recording modes for 72 or 50 Mbps recording, you can't get away with saying this isn't a cool choice. Since both larger- and smaller-sensor cameras can cut footage pretty well, it's interesting how this product can be used so efficiently in the role of second camera. Remote control and monitoring features are present through its built-in Wi-Fi components, adding to the modern practicality of this piece. To offer an idea, you can wield your Smartphone and use it alone to activate recording, alter settings and even monitor the image on this camera while you keep busy using the 'A' camera somewhere else at the wedding.

On a similar genre-note, check out the video-capable DSLR Canon EOS 5D Mark III with its full-frame, 22.3MP sensor. Its predecessor (the 5D Mark II) is quite famous for sparking off the whole HD/SLR phenomenon. The video-oriented features on this one are nothing short of superb. It permits an ALL-I recording mode, time-code embedding and audio recording adjustments. That sensor mentioned earlier makes room to record a rather film-like depth of field, making it the top attraction in this camera-type. From a professional standpoint its low-light performance is awesome, which is possible due a DIGIC 5+ image processor and a maximum ISO of 25600 in video mode.

Heading into the field of PTZ's, which are often misconstrued as poor-quality security-cam types that aren't worth a cent for wedding videography, the Panasonic AW-HE120K comes as a trendsetter. With robotic tilt, zoom and pan features (that got this camera-genre its 'PTZ' moniker to begin with) and an amazing broadcast quality of 1/3-inch 3MOS sensors (something you may have seen in bigger shoulder-mount products), this camera indeed sets the pace for other products in the genre. You can imagine how great an idea it is to use multiple cameras of this type at the wedding. To make managing them all easier is the sub-compact remote camera controller AW-RP50N. Capable of handling up to five different PTZ's you can use this remote to manipulate the zoom rocker switch, access the on-board pan/tilt joystick to move your camera where it's positioned, use the focus dial and much more.

Final Vid-Cam Guidelines

The products you were introduced to above are examples more than must-have's. You can get them if they suit your preferences and professional videographic needs, or you can use them as 'diving boards' to buy similar products that are better capable of meeting your demands on the wedding day you're covering.

In this sub-section, you're going to learn a few technical details from an ocean's worth of information. Consider the following guidelines as important but do further research afterwards on similar or other topics. The more you learn the better you become. That's a skill-state worth spending time to gather.

Scout Ahead: Check out the location ahead of time. This tip may not have been impressed as well as some others covered earlier in this chapter, but it's one of those moves that make your job easier and can also, sometimes, help you get footage that will turn out to be more than wow-worthy.

Test Your Equipment: If you've got a brand new kit or piece of equipment you may give in to a spot of temptation that demands you use said equipment for the first time on the wedding day. If you're already familiar with the item's functions on an earlier model you'll be even more inclined to give in to that desire. Never agree to this whim. Hardware and editing software have tendencies to develop 'personalities', not all of them appealing. Testing your equipment ahead of time is taking crucial steps in the right direction.

Checklist: This is mainly so you don't forget anything on the special day. Being remiss to take something as small as a memory card can cause all sorts of issues, if circumstances are such that a memory card is absolutely needed and, guess what, you haven't one with you. While you're at it, check each of your equipment features, functions and components, just in case. Prevention is better than cure, as they say (this is similar to the earlier point, but can't stress it enough).

Shoot A Lot: Take as much footage as possible. The principle behind such a more-is-better approach is that it's way more logical to edit down using what you have than to feel you've come up short and all that's left to do is lengthen the limited footage you have. Take close-ups, cover as many people and angles as possible, try out some quaint shots as well as some new ones and while you're at it, give an original idea or two a shot.

Be A Teleport: Whether you have assistants, just one extra hand to help out and/or even a few to several cameras, be in different places at any one time. The obvious idea behind this step is so you don't miss out on anything simply because you have to humanly move away from once location to cover another.

Dress Like A Spy: Being inconspicuous is one of your trump cards. The last thing people need to see is a garishly dressed videographer running all over the place. The more spy-like you are and ever in the background—no offense intended, mind you—the better your chances of focusing on the work at hand and not get in people's way.

A Sound With A View: Get your audio right. No matter how good your video footage, before and/or after editing, any trouble with your audio is sure to destroy the very appeal of the scene in question.

Edit, Edit, Edit: When it comes down to the editing phase, know that you're in for some long hours. Work your best magic then, edit till you get it right and never compromise. Everything about your quality, skills, talent, professionalism and more is determined right here in the editing stage, so never skimp a detail or two because you feel it's insignificant. Simply put, gain a sense of edit-insanity and have fun while at it.

The Bride's Word Is Biblical Law: Ask her beforehand what she wants covered and how she wants the angle. Do this before you opt for your own professional choices or suggestions. Discussing all your videographic ideas and how you're going to go about doing them is key, because not only will you make her feel special and look forward to seeing and enjoying the video you'll let her gain a marked level of personal reassurance that everything's going to be alright.

Chapter 6 – Record vs. Snapshot – Working With The Wedding Photographer

You can almost always be certain that you'll have a wedding photographer on site to work with. Yes, they can sometimes have their own unintentional ways of getting on your nerves but you must learn to cooperate if the two of you, hired by the bride or some other important person, are to make her day truly special. After all, to get some amazing video-photographic footage will be the highlight of the entire marriage event. There's magic and tech-genius just waiting to happen when two diverse viewpoints like film and photography team up.

Where photography has seen years of being in business the wedding-video boom began sometime in the 1980's and gradually grew into a favorite. They used to be unreasonably expensive, by modern standards. Today, it's the norm for weddings to have both a photographer and videographer covering the event, capturing memories in incredible ways.

If the two of you, the photographer and videographer, are hired as one package, working together becomes an obvious necessity. However, if you were hired separately, it's a smart idea to get in touch with the other and enter the discussion phase. No, this doesn't have to be an overly long talk. Sometimes a simply introductory phone call is all it takes. Share notes on lines like the wedding venue, time you two can start to get there in all punctuality, whether one of you has been to that location before, itinerary for the day and so on.

Once you meet up face to face, you can scout the area—keeping cooperation and civility top on your personal habit-list—and choose spots, zones and locations to split up and cover so neither of you gets in the other's hair all the time and has a flash interrupt a recording session or vice versa.

Create a basic strategy. Take lighting, for instance. Using this at the wrong time can get rather frustratingly for either one of you. The video may demand a subtle note while the photo requirement of the moment is a nice bright cover-all-details light-shine. This is why dividing and conquering is one of the greatest strategies where wedding photographers and videographers are involved.

Your day, as two professionals, should start way before the actual wedding. If the official ceremony is scheduled to be held at noon with a reception following after you wake up and go to work same time as so many other wedding personages and professionals, like the planner, florist, bridesmaids, and the bride and groom themselves.

During hair and makeup a photographer's presence is crucial to snap away memories after the girls are ready. A videographer too can capture some of the most fun and free moments during such preparation phases, so get started focusing on strategies to help the two of you cover all the needed angles without interrupting one another.

Sometimes hotels or other grand locations are chosen for the bride and her bridesmaids to stay overnight at. These locations add immense beauty and act like initiation zones, so to speak. Being the photographer and videographer, the two of you can capture a lot of footage filled with emotional value and teary moments as the day ends in a beautiful sunset and tomorrow ushers in a very special day. In this fashion you will be expected to arrive in good time, whenever that time is.

You could even cover the bachelor parties for both the bride and groom, if they so wish you to, adding to the footage quantity and potential for consequent quality post-editing. As you can imagine, there's no time to squabble with the other professional holding a rather different lens. The two of you together are tasked with shooting a wedding in bloom and you can't afford to miss a shot or scene simply because one or both of you couldn't get along.

Pre-wedding ceremonies are when the most photos and videos often get made. You can get the bride and groom in so many brilliant pictures and videos during this time, because the reception will probably have them interacting less with you than with everyone else who has come to the wedding. This also means you, the photographer and videographer, can plan to cover the reception more freely.

Such a disciplined approach is welcome indeed. You feel a lot of stress if you've to cover a lot in one stretch of time but can save yourself a lot of trouble by spreading out your workload. The only thing left to do is working together so the two of you don't create a whole new work-stress.

Sadly, it's often the case that a misunderstanding will occur between you two. It's not a pleasing thought, but it's possible. Remember that if such an unprofessional situation were to happen before you two actually get to the site needed, you just may have time to get back on that cart and help make a wedding awesome.

On the other hand, of the two of you engage in a tiff during the wedding process, be it just before, while or after the ceremony, it's going to get ugly for everyone involved. Bottomline is put aside your egos, personal pressure-points and whatnot and get your heads back in the game. You cannot hope to make a wedding go sour from a mild lack of cooperation on the parts of two people calling themselves professionals.

Like the florist, chef, planner and other 'gears' in the wedding machine, the two of you are vendors too, helping to make the whole event go smooth. A silly thing like arguing or constantly trying to win a battle of gestures from a distance is rather immature. Keep in mind that even if one of you wins the wedding-coverage battle you both lose the war, meaning no more referrals, no more work and no more respect.

This is actually a very real thing and nobody can blame the bride/groom or whoever hired you for ruining your careers. That's because you did something to ruin a very special day, an event you were specifically hired to cover and make great.

The embarrassment of it all is yet another factor to deal with. A practical strategy and sometimes-forced cooperation will save so many people so much awkwardness, delay and heartache. As human habits go, it's easier to recall the bad times than the good. Your job and the reason you're even a videographer/photographer is to record the good times, especially the magnificent life-contributions weddings bring.

If the two of you have a lot of individual experience in the industry, chances are you will be hired faster than rookies. The main reason, something most employers won't share with you, is they feel reassured that with such experience on both your parts you will know how best to work together in a professional capacity.

You may even be asked to sit for an interview with your counterpart. Don't be surprised if you're asked a point-blank question about how compatible you can be with the photographer or videographer sitting next to you. If you prove yourself wrong on the day, you will have 'liar' added to your list of misdemeanors so stay professional and stay alert.

It's alright to be asked by your employer whether you and your professional counterpart have spoken over the phone, got to know each other and/or formed a startup-strategy. Even if you aren't contacted in such a fashion, make sure the first time you two meet isn't at the wedding. If the latter is the case, it will be the time you might start to realize how efficiently haste makes waste.

Since the two of you are professionals with know-how on many a technical topic, it's a great idea to share personal styles and preferences and use common jargon terms, if you like, to get the feel of it all. This will make sure you help each other expand your coverage in some of the most surprising ways and also share that 'silent bond' that keeps one out of the other's way, because you recognized a personal-preference in action.

This brings us to that one in-your-face statement meant to help rather than insult: The day isn't about you, it's about the bride, her groom and a wedding filled with joy, memories and magic. Work together, work your magic and be professionals with a passion for what you do.

Chapter 7 – Shoot A Stellar Wedding Video – Final Tips

There are several tips and guides you have been exposed to in this book where wedding videography is concerned. It doesn't mean you can't take a second look, right? Brush up on your tips and basic know-how. No one can say just how efficiently something as simple as one of the guidelines below can help save your wedding videography career.

Listen More Than You Suggest: When it comes down to it, a wedding is a lot of things. The single most important fact is that it centers on the bride. This is essentially the day a Princess becomes a Queen, so use that imaginative-cue to help you listen to what the bride wants by way of video coverage. It can be something as simple as scenes involving a holding of hands with her hubby or their sharing a romantic kiss and so on. Pay attention to these details. Putting it simply, what may seem corny to you is packed with emotional value for the bride and groom, so shoot it the way she wants it.

What's In A Theme: It's often the case that the couple work in the same industrial setting, be it aviation, the armed services, a certain specific business, particular item-manufacturing fields and such like. Sometimes their wedding will have that common theme almost everywhere you turn. When you plan on using that theme to enhance your angles, shots and audio effects, and similar shots taken elsewhere to suit said theme you're certain to add to their idea of a themed wedding and make the bride, groom and everyone else involved truly appreciate what you've done.

It's All Part Of The Plan: You simply must create a neat layout of the schedule, events, extras, maybe's, miscellaneous and confirmed moments in a concise wedding-video plan. Leave some space under each sub-topic so you can add ideas and notes to help hone your work for the day. Not only will your video come out professionally done with such a disciplined approach you will also leave nothing out, from the important sections to the silly-simple ones that bring so much charm to a wedding video.

It's Your Rehearsal Too: Get to the rehearsal. Don't assume it's not for you and there will be nothing of value to cover there. Be that as it may, the rehearsal will help you, um, rehearse too and get into the mood of it all. You'll find yourself taking copious notes of locations, angles, perspectives and ideas. You'll map out key electrical outlets, observe movement space to later capture some wonderful panoramic scenes in, note down lighting and sound issues that your professional senses will pick up more readily when at the site and where all the key people are seated. Besides, what wonderful behind-the-scenes footage you will gather if you do decide to tape the entire rehearsal.

Equipment Check: Go all out with this step. See if all your equipment is present and check to see if their individual components are functioning at optimum. Take everything needed with you, arranged in all the right slots and bags. Your aim is to save as many minutes as you can and prevent a delay of any kind. Take spare batteries and other extras, you may not know how useful they are until a video-emergency takes place. Many a professional has lost their credibility because they forgot to take one itty-bitty piece of equipment that was invaluable at the time. Take deep breaths and double-check.

Craft Contacts: Get their numbers, take their cards and update your phone's contact list using their missed-calls. However, most important of all will be for you to make it look humble, simple and charming. Don't want to look too desperate, now. These contacts are crucial, without whom the very reason for you even having a wedding photo/video business will be moot. In addition to this, do your job on a very professional level. Referrals, a very important form of contact-crafting, will follow after a job well done on a day to remember.

Cover Everything: Rehearsals, dinners, lunches, pre-, inter- and post- events, outdoors, indoors, obviously the Church ceremony and anything else you can get on camera. Your aim is to make a one-of-a-kind wedding video that is going to be part of a family's life for decades to come. You need all the footage you can use to make this possible, from the silly to the sublime. Your talent, experience and imagination aren't just the limit, there's the passion to better yourself, a personal desire as the videographer to be a perfectionist and that elusive sense of simplicity which more often than not trumps all the complexity you can pack into a shot.

Edit Till You Can't: This is a priceless piece of advice. Edit your footage and don't stop until you feel there's nothing left to make better. Awesomeness is a hard state to attain. The more smart and hard work you apply to the task the better your video becomes. This is the key step, a sort of river-delta where everything flows into and becomes part of something bigger. Get it right, do it like a professional and have fun.

Making memories is one thing, making them last is a whole other form of magic.

Make it last...

Make it count...

Make it memorable...