



# Video

Digital  
Communication  
& Production

Second Edition

By  
**Jim Stinson**

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**About the Author**

After graduating from Harvard, Jim Stinson studied theater history at the Yale Graduate School and directing at the Yale School of Drama before transferring to the UCLA film school, where he earned the degree of Master of Fine Arts. Although he has worked on filmed commercials, TV series, and feature films, he has spent most of his career as a writer, producer, director, videographer, and/or editor of educational and corporate video programs.

In the classroom, he has taught film production at Art Center College of Design, film studies at California State University, Los Angeles, and video production at La Cañada High School, La Cañada, CA. Recently, he has been presenting twelve or more seminars each year on video production.



For twelve years, he was a columnist and Contributing Editor at *Videomaker* magazine. In addition to *Video: Digital Communication & Production*, his published works include four mystery novels set in Hollywood: *Double Exposure*, *Low Angles*, *Truck Shot*, and *TV Safe*, as well as the study, *Restorations of Elizabethan Public Playhouses*.

## About this Book

*Video: Digital Communication and Production* fulfills the promise of its title by covering both the ways in which video communicates with viewers and the methods by which it does so. Communication is featured because production by itself has no purpose. If communication were excluded, this book would be like a carpentry manual that covered sawing, drilling, and nailing without ever explaining how to build anything.

This book treats video as a mature and independent medium, rather than merely a variant of television or a recording alternative to film. Video has become fully empowered by the digital revolution that is transforming so many aspects of twenty-first century life.

The topics in this book have been selected and organized with two groups of readers in mind: students preparing for careers in communications media and creators of personal programs who expect to make videos of professional caliber. Though the text does not pretend to include all there is to know about video, it does cover all you need to get started.

To organize this sprawling subject, *Video: Digital Communication and Production* is presented in six major sections:

- Chapters 1 and 2 help you start making videos immediately.
- Chapters 3 through 8 cover video communication: the concepts and principles behind the hardware and production techniques.
- Chapters 9 and 10 present the crucial process of preproduction: preparing to make successful programs.
- Chapters 11 through 16 introduce all major aspects of videography, lighting, and audio.
- Chapters 17 and 18 survey the art of directing—both the camera and the people it records.
- Chapters 19 through 24 explain the basics of postproduction. This edition provides greatly expanded coverage of digital editing processes and techniques.

This organization may be termed “semi-random-access:” On the one hand, it is possible to read only the chapters desired, in any order. On the other hand, individual chapters will generally be more useful in conjunction with the others in their sections. In most cases, larger subjects have been distributed among multiple chapters for simplicity of presentation. For this reason, expect to find occasional duplication of material, since the same concepts and techniques may apply to procedures covered in different chapters.

### About This New Edition

The word “Digital” has been added to the title of this book for this edition, reflecting the fact that video production is now entirely digital, from the camcorder at one end to the DVD at the other. The computer has also taken over film-based production so completely that, outside of certain technicalities of lighting and cinematography, a person trained in video can work in film with equal confidence.

To reflect this trend, the original four chapters on postproduction have been largely replaced by six new or heavily revised units that treat digital editing in greater depth, including professional-level DVD authoring.

Other major revisions reflect requests from readers:

- The chapters on lighting have been reorganized and expanded from two to three, to clarify procedures and include more solutions for practical lighting problems.



- The chapter on visual composition has been doubled in length, to provide more examples and to address the challenge of visual design for the wide-screen video format that is starting to replace the traditional TV proportions.
- The chapter on program development has been expanded to deal more thoroughly with script-writing for different video genres.
- The five chapters on video communication have been augmented by a sixth unit that brings together the separate concepts of video space, time, composition, language, and sound, to present a unified esthetic of expression in this medium.

Finally, the text throughout has been reviewed and revised as needed, to clarify information, update technical details, and add useful information. Hundreds of illustrations have been added, revised, or replaced to expand content and/or improve presentation.

Overall, the author and publisher hope that we have increased the attractiveness of this book in the process of enhancing its usefulness.

The author and publisher cordially solicit corrections and suggestions from readers. Please help us improve the book by e-mailing us at [www.g-w.com](http://www.g-w.com).

Finally, as you use this book, remember that video production is both a demanding discipline and a source of great satisfaction. Like pro golfers, video professionals are generally pleased to be paid for doing things that they would happily do for free. If *Video: Digital Communication and Production* enhances your pleasure as it increases your skills, then the book will have fulfilled its purpose.

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**A note on “tape:”** This new edition somewhat reduces the use of words like “taping” and “footage” as alternative recording formats become more popular. However, classic terms are highly resistant to change. After all, people still speak of “filming” with a camcorder and actual film is often called “celluloid,” which disappeared over 60 years ago!

JS

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