

# Introduction

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**E**ver want to get away from the spoon-fed content on your television? Do you wonder what life is like inside other people's houses (or, for that matter, heads)? Did you ever want to share some amusing observation about your life with the world? Behold the videoblog: the emotional voyeur's (and exhibitionist's) way of sharing with the world the most up-close and personal views of a human life. It's a step beyond what you may have heard about blogs. In a text blog, you can capture and present such a moment in words, but it has all the immediacy of a newspaper article. Add pictures, and it's visually interesting, but still kind of ho-hum.

But drop a video into that blog, and suddenly you have people riveted! Whether your interest is just a personal video diary, an instructional video, a promotion, or to tell the political story you feel hasn't been told, videoblogs are a powerful and immediate medium for telling your story.

## *About This Book*

This book isn't meant to be read from front to back. It's more like a reference. Each chapter is divided into sections, each of which has self-contained information about a specific task in videoblogging.

You don't have to remember anything in this book. Nothing is worth memorizing. The information here is what you need to know to get by and nothing more. And wherever I mention a new term — or am possessed by the need to get geeky with the technical descriptions — I've been sure to let you know so you can decide whether to read them or ignore them. (I am thoughtful, aren't I? You're welcome.)

## *Conventions Used in This Book*

I know that doing something the same way over and over again can be boring (the way Mr. Rogers always wore the same kind of sweater), but sometimes consistency can be a good thing. For one thing, it makes stuff easier to understand. In this book, those consistent elements are *conventions*. In fact, one of those is the *italic* typeface I use to identify and define new terms.

Whenever you have to type something, I put the stuff you need to type in **bold** type so it is easy to see.

When URLs (Web addresses) appear within a paragraph, they look like this: `www.dummies.com`. If I need to show you code (for example, a snippet of HTML to embed a video in your blog), I use a code font like this:

```
<a href="http://www.example.com/Video.mp4"
    rel="enclosure">
<br />Click here for the movie! (MPEG-4 format)</a>
```

This book covers both Macintosh and Windows computers, but the emphasis is on Macs running Mac OS X. When I mention Windows, I focus on Windows XP, because it's the first Windows platform to natively support editing movies, with Windows Movie Maker.

## *What You Don't Have to Read*

You don't need to read the sidebars if you don't want to — they're extra details, notes, and information to help you figure things out, or cool little tidbits to make your vlogging experience more fun.

Likewise, any paragraph next to a Technical Stuff icon beside it is similarly optional reading, because those paragraphs are where I get a little more geeky than normal.

## *Foolish Assumptions*

I have to make some assumptions about you, the reader. First, I have to assume that you already have a computer and a video camera. Now, granted, I do actually give a bit of advice on buying a computer or a camera if you don't already have one — but my basic assumption is that you do, in fact, already have these basic pieces of equipment.

I also assume that you have a connection to the Internet. I also assume that your Internet connection is not a slow dial-up connection. The fact is, videoblogging is very difficult if you're not on a high-speed connection. That means satellite, DSL, cable modem, a T1, or (at the very least) an ISDN line.

Finally, I assume that you more or less know how to download and install a software program, and that if I tell you to go to a Web site and follow the directions there, you're good to go. Why would I point you to a Web site

instead of telling you how to do this myself? Because some things change quickly and will be obsolete after this book goes to print. I'd hate to meticulously explain something, and then have you try it out and find out it didn't work!



The Internet changes quickly. By the time this book gets into your hands, a Web site I recommend might have changed. Please make good use of your favorite search engine if you can't find a Web page that I mention in this book.

## *How This Book Is Organized*

I divided this book into parts, which I organized by topic. The parts point out the most important aspects of videoblogging. If you're looking for information on a specific videoblogging topic, check the index or skim the headings in the table of contents and flip to the indicated page.

By design, this book enables you to get as much (or as little) information as you need at any particular moment. Need to know something fast to set up an RSS feed? Read the section of Chapter 13 that applies. *Videoblogging For Dummies* is intended as a reference that you can reach for again and again whenever some new question about videoblogging comes up.

### *Part I: Zen and the Art of Videoblogs*

This part gives an overview of videoblogging. It's part introduction, and part quick-and-dirty get-you-started fun. Here's where you find information on watching videoblogs, getting your computer set up for videoblogging, and creating your first, basic videoblog post.

### *Part II: Step Away from the Camera*

Okay, this part doesn't really get away from the camera, but it does focus on the parts of videoblogging where you don't necessarily want the camera present. For example, getting feedback on your videoblog, branding a look and feel, overcoming stage fright, and planning a videoblog entry — as well as scripting it — are all in this part.

## *Part III: Lights, Camera, Vlog!*

This part talks about more advanced filmmaking techniques, including composition, lighting, sound, and file formats and compression. If you're an experienced videographer, you'll find the file formats section interesting, but if you're new to storytelling through a lens, then you'll want to read Chapter 9 on composing shots and using the camerawork to tell your story.

## *Part IV: Going Public*

In this part, you get the preflight briefing about putting your videoblog on the Internet, publicizing it, managing the permissions, and keeping an eye on your traffic and bandwidth expenses.

## *Part V: The Part of Tens*

I've remained true to *For Dummies* style by including a Part of Tens. The chapters in this part can help you quickly find ten or so vlogs to watch, personal vlogging ideas, and business videoblogging ideas. The Part of Tens is a resource you can turn to again and again.

## *Icons Used in This Book*

To make your experience with the book easier, I use various icons in the margins of the book to indicate particular points of interest.



Whenever I give you a hint or a tip that makes an aspect of videoblogging easier to do, I mark it with this little Tip thingamabob — it's my way of sharing what I've figured out the hard way, so you don't have to.



This icon is a friendly reminder or a marker for something that you want to make sure that you keep in mind.



Ouch! This icon is the equivalent of an exclamation point. Warnings give you important directions to keep you from experiencing any nightmares. (Well, at least where videoblogging is concerned. Offering premonitions about your personal life costs extra.)



Sometimes I feel obligated to give you some technical information, although it doesn't really affect how you vlog. I mark that stuff with this geeky fellow so you know it's just background information.

## *Where to Go from Here*

Now you're ready to use this book. Look over the table of contents and find something that catches your attention, or a topic that you think can help you solve a problem — and go for it!

If you end up needing a little help, or you want to tell me about your new vlog, or you'd like to see some of the example videos from this book, check out [www.mortaine.com/vlogdummies](http://www.mortaine.com/vlogdummies). You'll find examples, updated links to resources mentioned in this book, links to reader vlogs, and a way to send me a link to your own vlog!