

PRVA EKONOMSKA ŠKOLA

Medulićeva 33, Zagreb

A quick guide:

Tips and tricks – how we created our school's podcast

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Introduction

Our podcast was started by colleagues Nina Bionda and Ivana Picukarić. The best thing that was done at the start was the set, because it actually set the "look&feel". After this presentation, you can see how it is actually a funny micro space, since we are limited by space, and if you want, we can also record a short podcast.

In the beginning it was recorded with a mobile phone, and the video editing was done in a Canva.

There are several limits that are present in this case, first of all it is important to achieve consistency in the visuals of the podcast itself, and this is achieved by controlling the light and sound. Consistency makes it easier for us since we can simulate the same recording conditions and thus reduce the time needed to realize a podcast episode. So, we try to continuously introduce changes and improvements in the creation of podcasts.

In the next 30 minutes or so, I will explain to you some of the problems we encountered and I will demonstrate how the assembly of all the materials looks like in the final version of the material for publication on the YouTube platform.

Lighting

In order to achieve consistency in the light context, we use two lights, one is a key light, the other is a small auxiliary light that we use for additional lighting. Of course, one light can also be used, which we can modify using a brightener. Modifying the light is very important since using a continuous light without a modifier makes for very sharp shadows that don't look nice. As modifiers, we use umbrellas or octabox.

The intensity of the light depends on the size of the room, and when choosing the light, you should take into account how the set is arranged, where the participants sit and how they are lit. Since we have two participants, the position of the light determines that the participant closer to the light is better lit than the other participant, therefore we use two lights. When lighting, you should take into account the inverse square rule - where the power of the light decreases by 75% with each meter of distance, for example, at the second meter from the light, the light must illuminate an area 4 times larger than the initial one, that is, only 25% of the light is left at our disposal.

Natural lighting

If you don't have a budget for lighting, you can also use natural light, but in that case we lose the consistency of the light. The light depends on the time of day, atmospheric conditions, and it is necessary to always adjust the exposure accordingly – at one moment we can have too much light, at another too little.

Camera

Instead of a mobile phone, we shoot with a digital camera mounted on a tripod. Most cell phones today have fantastic video quality. The camera, on the other hand, offers greater flexibility of settings (exposure triangle – ISO, aperture, shutter speed), and also the possibility of using different lenses.

By using the same camera, we ensure a consistent display of colors, and if you were to change different mobile phones, each of them has its own color science. Regardless of the flood of new camera models and the constant development of sensors, today more or less all cameras are good for making podcasts, since the podcast is not demanding, and quality content, well-composed lighting and sound have a greater influence on the quality of the podcast itself.

Video settings

The camera settings we use are 1080p, 24fps. When recording video, it is important that the shutter speed on the camera is set to approximately twice the fps number. If we use too fast a shutter speed for the video, then it looks unnatural. If we use 24fps, then we use 1/50 shutter speed, for 30fps 1/60, etc.

Since the room where we shoot is small, we use a wide-angle lens, and since the light we have at our disposal is relatively weak, the lens we use should be brighter, that is, it should have a larger aperture. When choosing a camera, it is important to keep in mind how long the camera can continuously record video - in our case, after about 40 minutes of recording, the camera overheats and then it is necessary to wait for the sensor and electronics to cool down before continuing with recording. This lasts about 15 minutes before we can continue recording.

Sound recording

To record sound, we use a directional (gunshot) microphone mounted on the camera. If you do not have a microphone on the camera, you can use the built-in microphone on the camera itself. Since the lenses on the camera make noises when focusing, they can significantly degrade the sound of the recording. For this reason, we started using an external audio recorder (zoom) that we hide between the podcast participants and it records the audio excellently.

Generally, the microphone on the camera is a backup. One of the problems that we were unable to solve during the recording is the noise outside the room that the microphone registers, which is why we always record when classes are in progress, but it often happens that someone walks by and makes noise in the corridor while we are recording. Since we are "guests" in this building, we don't have many options, but when we return to our building, we will definitely soundproof the room where we are recording.

A good idea is to use wireless microphones such as rode wireless go or dji mic systems, but they are quite expensive. The advantage is certainly the direct synchronization with the camera that is recording - although it is not a problem to synchronize the footage recorded with an external recorder - which I will demonstrate later.

4K ili 1080p?

As I mentioned, we do everything in 1080p. It's still the dominant standard on most platforms and is more than adequate for podcasts. The plan is of course to improve the quality of the video, but primarily with better lighting and a microphone system, possibly with a better lens. We can also increase the quality of video recordings (upscale) using specialized software - eg Topaz Video

enhance, etc. Which is ultimately cheaper than buying new equipment. An additional reason to use 1080p quality is that the records are smaller, so it is easier to store and process the video.

Once the video is recorded, it needs to be checked and organized into folders, and then we start editing. We use DaVinci Resolve in the free version for video editing. The difference between the free version and the studio version (329 EUR) is that the commercial version offers resolutions higher than 4K, 10-bit video up to 120fps, various additional effects, etc. For the vast majority of users, even the regular version offers too much.

Davinci Resolve

The first thing you need to know about DaVinci Resolve is that this software is seriously powerful when it comes to video editing.

The 'Project Manager Window' is the first screen you'll see when you open DaVinci Resolve and it's essentially like your launch pad. Here, you can see existing projects that you've already created or you can start new ones by clicking on 'New Project' at the bottom of the screen.



Once you've selected a project, you'll be taken to the 'DaVinci Resolve Interface' where you can access different 'workspaces' that allow you to complete certain functions such as editing, color grading and special effects editing.

These workspaces are:

- Media: where you import & store all the media you'll be using in your video
- Cut: where you perform basic edits to cut down your footage
- Edits: where the bulk of your editing happens
- Fusion: where you add any special effects and motion graphics
- Color: where you can color grade and color correct
- Fairlight: where you get access to all the professional audio tools
- Deliver: where you can export and render your video projects

You'll essentially be working through most, if not all of these workspaces to turn your raw footage into a high quality video that you'll be proud of. And if you're doing it correctly, you'll be moving from left to right, starting in 'Media' and working your way along the workspaces as you go through each of the editing phases.

1. Configure your Settings in DaVinci Resolve

Configuring some basic settings in DaVinci Resolve is like laying the foundations of a house. Do this correctly and you'll set yourself up for success. In the bottom right of your screen, you will find the 'Settings' button. The main settings to adjust are the:

- Timeline Resolution: We usually set this to 1920 x 1080
- Timeline Frame Rate: We use 25 frames per second (you will most likely select 24, 25 or 30fps depending on the type of footage that you have)
- Playback Frame Rate: Match this number to the timeline frame rate
- Video Format: Match this number to the timeline frame rate

2. Get to Know the Editing Tools in DaVinci Resolve

There are a ton of useful features available in DaVinci which enhance the editing experience by giving you greater control and flexibility when you're editing.

Check out the features below and test them yourself to get a feel for how they work:

- The Playback Monitor: shows you what your finished product will look like (at the top of the screen)
- The Preview Window: is great for previewing clips before you drag them onto the timeline
- The Playback Controls: allow you to play through your footage and zoom in or out on the timeline to get more control, or more perspective over the edit
- Full Zoom: will allow you to zoom back out to see the entire edit
- Detail Zoom: will jump straight into where the playback head is

You can also customize how the clips on the timeline look by turning the audio waveforms on/off or adding/removing thumbnails.

3. Import your Video Footage into DaVinci Resolve

The next step is to import your video footage into DaVinci. We recommend importing all the files you'll need when you start editing such as music tracks, B-roll footage, images as well as the raw footage so they're all in one place and ready to go when it comes time to edit.

To import files:

- Select the 'Media' tab in the bottom menu
- Right-click within the 'Media Pool' and select 'Import Media'
- Find the footage that you want to import
- Press 'Open'

Tip: If you hold down 'Control/Command' and select multiple clips, they will all be imported when you hit 'Open'.

You can also simply drag and drop the footage into the 'Media Pool' if you have the folder easily accessible on your computer.

4. Learn How to Edit Videos in DaVinci Resolve

Step 1: Refine your Raw Footage

The first step on the editing journey is to bring in all of the primary video footage onto the timeline by simply dragging it down.

We then recommend that you do a quick scan of your footage and remove anything that you know you don't want to use in your finished video. At this point though, if you're unsure about any clips, leave them in there for now.

There are two areas in DaVinci Resolve where you can cut down your footage which are:

- The Cut workspace: where you can start to trim down your footage with some considerably basic tools. This is useful if you're going to be cutting down lots of different clips.
- The Edit workspace: where you can cut down your footage and build out the story, all within this one workspace.

To cut/trim down your footage in DaVinci Resolve:

- Click 'Play' to watch the footage and identify the specific clips you want to remove
- Move your cursor to the start of that clip and notice that it changes to look like handles
- Click and drag your cursor towards the right until you reach the part you want to keep
- If you have blank spaces – select them with your cursor and click 'Delete' to remove

Step 2: Build Out the Story

Once you've completed a first pass and removed the footage you don't want, it's now time to add in some B-roll or overlay footage to help your viewers stay engaged and better understand your video.

Step 3: Manage audio

Step 4: Add in Titles or Graphics

Now that you've added in your audio, it's time to add any text, titles or graphics into your video.

To add these in click 'Effects Library' and then 'Titles'

The titles in the top menu are basic text titles that you can add in and customize as you like. The 'Fusion' titles are more advanced and have cool features like 3D.

You can customize your titles in the 'Inspector Palette' by changing:

- Fonts, font size, position or rotating the titles
- Adding in drop shadows, strokes or backgrounds to match your branding
- Adjusting the length or start/end time of your title

Step 5: Add in any Transitions or Effects

Transitions can make your video look super polished but the key is to not go overboard and add in too many. Use them sparingly to add in a storytelling element to your videos. Less is more!

- To add in transitions, click 'Effects Library' and then 'Video Transitions'
- To add in a 'Fade In' transition, click on 'Cross Dissolve' in the left menu bar and drag it onto your clip at the start or the end (or both)
- A 'Dip to Color Transition' has a similar effect but incorporates a brief fade to a specified color (usually white or black) as well as the fade between the clips

Step 6: Set Audio Levels

There are two general areas of audio that you need to pay attention to during the editing process.

The first is the spoken audio which is the core/primary audio in the video. We'd recommend that you start here and adjust this first.

To do this:

- Mute the music so the only sound you can hear is what's actually being said in the video.
- Enable the audio mixer by clicking on 'Workspace' in the top menu bar, then 'Show Panel in the Workspace' and select 'Mixer'. You can then see the various volume levels for the different audio files in the menu on the bottom right of the screen.
- 'Main 1' refers to the overall master volume. This gives you the ability to control the audio levels of the individual audio clips or the overall audio. Slide the volume level up and down to adjust the audio level.
- Pay attention to the colors in the audio menu as your video is playing. Ideally you want your volume within the yellow area or just within the red area but definitely not touching the top. If it does touch the top, grab the slider and lower it down a little.
- If you want to adjust your audio on a clip-by-clip basis, you can put your mouse on the volume line that appears in the center of the clip and simply drag it up and down.

Once you're happy with your primary audio, you'll then need to adjust the second area of audio which is the music track that complements your spoken audio. We normally set our music level at around -25 to -30 decibels but there's no hard rule with this. As long as your viewers can still hear and understand any spoken audio is the main goal here.

Step 7: Color Grade your Video

The next step in the editing process is to color grade your video. There are a ton of professional color grading tools built into DaVinci but let's stick with the basics for this beginner tutorial.

- To enter the color grading area click on 'Color Workspace' where you can find the color nodes (layers) and color adjustment tools
- Start by enabling the 'Scopes Viewer' to get a visual representation of the colors and brightness of the colors in your video clips

Next, start color grading (correcting) your clip with the 'Lift Slider' and then from there, you can adjust each of these to get the look you're after:

- Gain: changes the brightness of the bright (white) areas in your shot
- Gamma: changes the mid-range colors in your shot
- Contrast: changes the contrast levels in your shot
- Saturation: allows you to change the amount of color in your shot

Tip: If you want to apply these settings to the other clips or your B-roll, select the node, then 'Control/Command + C' to copy it and then come across to the clip you want to apply it to and click 'Control/Command + V' to paste it.

Step 8: Export and Review your Video

The final step in the process is to export your video!

- Click on 'Deliver' in the bottom menu and then click on the drop down arrow next to the YouTube icon in the top left menu and choose if you want to export in 720p, 1080p, or 2160p
- Give your file a name and then click 'Browse' to choose where you want to save it
- When you've reviewed your video and you're happy with it, just hit 'Add to Render Queue' and then 'Start Render' to start saving your video

When your video is ready, we'd strongly recommend that you preview your video on a few different devices (phone, computer, tablet etc.) to make sure you're happy with the overall look and feel of your video on multiple devices.

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