

DAVE MASON PRODUCTIONS

www.davemason.co.nz



Company Profile

Dave Mason Productions Limited is an Auckland based Independent Television Production Company. Offering a full range of production facilities, the man behind the company, Dave Mason- has more than 30 years' experience producing television programmes, corporate productions and commercial DVD's in New Zealand, United Kingdom, Europe and the USA.

The company employs experienced and knowledgeable staffs who are passionate about what they do and take pride in working closely and effectively with all clients.

Our production base is in Orewa, on Auckland's Hibiscus Coast where the fully contained production facilities include offices, edit suites and sound suites resulting in a cost effective one-stop shop for television productions.

Main Contact

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Recent Clients

The Warehouse
The Farmers Trading Company
NZ Army
Vet Nurse Association
NZ Hothouse

Dept of Corrections
Treescape
Royal NZ Navy
Vet Association
CityCare (Christchurch)

Sky City
NZRAF
DHBNZ (Shared Services)
Massey University
Warehouse Stationery

Dave Mason Productions Limited - Programme Production Guide

Script Development

The key areas we need to know about are:

The Target Audience

Who's going to watch and why?

The aim of the TV programme and /or DVD

What is the purpose of the programme?

The Production Style

How is the production to be produced? Presenter driven, voice-over driven or a mixture of both? Lots of music or no music?

Location based or studio based?

Will the production be a studio discussion or will we be travelling the country telling the story?

Punctuated with graphics or a does the programme just run its course?

Many productions, especially those designed to stimulate discussion may be punctuated with summaries, which at those points, if shown in a group environment, the DVD can be stopped and a discussion ensues.

Script Production

We are highly experienced in producing television programmes, corporate productions and DVDs. Our project methodology is tried, tested and proven. The key to success is communication. We need to fully understand our client's requirements and we turn those requirements into a professional video production. We fully appreciate that as the project gets underway the criteria may change as practical aspects of the production unfold. It is having the ability to be flexible that is another key to success.

Logistics and Scheduling

We produce many complex programmes that require careful pre-production and scheduling. We have a standard in-house budgeting software package that has been adapted to our requirements. It is important to utilise resources efficiently and cost effectively. Planning is the key to success.

Master and Copies

Once our programmes are shot on broadcast quality high definition wide screen equipment, the field footage comes to our edit suites and is ingested into the computer systems. We edit using the Avid editing system and once edited and approved a master file is produced. The master file then goes to our sound suite where the sound is treated, extra music, sound effects and voice over added. This sound track is now laid on to the master file. The master file goes to our DVD authoring suite where the menus for the DVD are produced, the programme is compressed and chapters added and so on. From this the mater DVD is produced. In the DVD suite we have four DVD copying machines and we normally copy up to 500 copies in-house. Longer runs are sent to a copying house. Our master DVDs are held in our DVD library so that further copies can be produced if required by the client. Slicks (the paper sleeve) for the DVDs are designed in house and printed to the highest quality at our printers. We can package DVDs in a number of ways; Standard clear library case, clam shell case (no slick) or a simple plastic sleeve (no slick).

Re-cutting

Changes are often required to projects but it is important for the client to be fully aware of the production process so that costs are kept to a minimum. The only limitations to changes are time and money. We keep the client informed throughout the production process with sign offs at key stages but we are fully aware that criteria may change along the way which will require more changes. We are happy to be flexible but it must be remembered that re-cuts cost money. We try to make all changes and get sign off before the production reaches the master output stage.

Creative Approach

Our creative approach is to first *listen to the client*. Once we have the brief then we bring it back to our offices and with the production team, talk through various possibilities for the programme. It's a development stage. From this, ideas are drafted out, which usually involves using a large white board from which a shoot proposal is developed. This is the stage where a programme running order is produced which details the direction the programme will go and who is involved doing what on screen. This running order is then approved by the client. Once approved, a shooting script is developed and this details who, what and where is being filmed in the running order and what is being said. This will also include the draft linking voice-over script. The shooting script is then presented to the researcher appointed to the project who, with the director, will normally visit the locations and people involved ahead of the shoot to set up the filming. Days are agreed to film and the script, shooting schedule and running order finalised and signed off by the client. Filming then takes place. Any graphics for the production are usually worked on while the filming is taking place and all these creative elements come together in the edit suite once filming has been completed.

Crew

All our film crews are freelance. We have cameramen that we have worked with for many years. Nowadays, many shoots are PSC (portable single camera) where the cameraman also looks after the sound elements. If there are situations that may have more than two people speaking or maybe a musical element then we would employ a sound engineer to accompany the cameraman on the shoot. We hire to order and in doing so we manage our crews very effectively.

Dave Mason Productions Limited - Programme Experience

Our *Just the Job* careers TV Series is written and produced by us and we are now in production for a tenth series of 10 programmes. To date 90 half hour TV programmes have been written, produced and broadcast. Each programme is made up of 3 separate 7 minute segments and each segment can be considered as a programme in its own right. Once produced, DVD copies of the individual segments are authored and copied for their promotional use. To date over 250 such segments have been produced with DVD runs ranging from 50 copies to 2000 copies. Once the series has been compiled and put to air then we produce a double DVD of the whole series which is then sent to every secondary school in the country (about 550). Further copies are sent to Work and Income (about 200) and we also send copies to the Pacific Islands for use in their schools. Extra copies have also been order by schools and other establishments bring the total for Just the Job alone to DVD copies to over 5,000 DVD copies.

Our core business is making TV programmes for broadcast, web based programmes and DVD productions for the corporate and educational sector. We produce, duplicate, print and package many thousands of DVDs every year in-house. For long runs we outsource the duplication where the DVD is replicated rather than duplicated - a process that involves making a glass master which is then stamped to make copies.

As our business has grown so has the investment in plant and equipment.

Our largest production is our Just the Job series. The series employing a crew of 15 people and a budget of over \$540,000 per 10 part series.

Medium Production would be along the lines of our two State Sector DVDs which were produced for Learning State, the State Sector ITO and training DVDs for InfraTrain and FRSITO to accompany their Unit Standards.

An example of a small production was for the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation. It was a one day *green screen* shoot for their new web site. The shoot involved shooting four characters that are at various stages of their career. They were promoting the building industry as a career. This was for the BCITO website and we were contracted to shoot the pieces, edit them and then prepare them for the web involving compression and *matting* the characters so that they can pop up and tell their stories to the viewer. The result can be seen at <http://constructionzone.co.nz/real-stories/real-stories.html>.

Directing Crew

We have a long list of satisfied customers. Dave Mason is at the helm of the company and personally oversees every production. He has been in the TV production business since 1976 and has a long and impressive list of credits to his name. The people that Dave employs are all highly experienced personnel. It is this combined experience that ensures a positive outcome for all the company productions.

Dave Mason Productions Limited – Professionalism

Standard

We keep the client in the loop the whole way with sign offs at various stages of the production. All our productions are carried out to the highest professional standard both technically and creatively. Every production is produced to the latest TVNZ technical broadcast standards using the latest wide screen broadcast camera equipment. Our post production (editing and sound) equipment utilises the latest digital technology. We pride ourselves on our quality of product and professional standards. The best tool to ensure professionalism is experience and that is what we pride ourselves in. All talent complete and sign release forms for our records to ensure that there will be no problems with permissions to show the finished production to an audience. We also obtain signed permissions with locations and organisations we film at. We are fully conversant with copyright legislation with music and video. We have an excellent working relationship with AMCOS – the music copyright organisation

Timeframes

At the start of a production we will produce a production schedule. This is carefully produced utilising the brief for the project. Every one of our projects has come in on time and on budget and the key is careful pre-production planning. Again, it is years of experience that is behind producing realistic and practical production schedules. Our system has been developed over the years by Dave Mason. Such is the respect for this system that Dave was consulted by TVNZ when they were installing their new computer planning software so that some of the aspects of the system could be incorporated into that software for programme production planning.

Talent Rapport

Often the talent we use are new to being in front of a camera. We put the talent at ease by explaining carefully what is involved and being patient. It is a case of building up trust and encouraging the talent to obtain the best performance possible. Depending upon the project, it is sometimes possible for the Researcher and /or the Director to meet face to face with the talent prior to the shoot but if this cannot happen for practical reasons then we always talk to the talent over the phone before the shoot to carefully explain the procedure. Without the talent you don't have the story so it is vital to build up a very good rapport with that person.

Cultural Resources

There are times when it is necessary to seek cultural advice for a production. Good examples of this being when filming on Marae or dealing with ethnic issues and procedures. Again it is pre-production, good research and being respectful of other people's culture that is important. The way one would access cultural advice and/ or resources would depend upon the project in hand but we have a lot of experience dealing with a range of cultural resources in New Zealand and gaining access to those resources for filming. Some examples of this would be when we filmed for Just the Job on Kapiti Island. The story was about eco-tourism and the eco-tourism operation on the island which is run by a local Maori Iwi with John Barrett as the CEO. We spent a day on the island ahead of filming making sure that all protocol and permissions were agreed and adhered to ahead of filming a few weeks later. We work a lot with the Department of Conservation. By design, they protect carefully the lands in their care and have strict rules and guidelines for filming. Over the years we have worked closely with DOC filming in the Tongariro National Park for our documentary on The Grand Chateau and Dave Mason's documentary on the making of Lord of the Rings "The Real Middle Earth". We worked closely with Doc when we filmed around the Nelson Lakes for our Just the Job series when we featured the work and career of a DOC Ranger. The documentaries we produced for Learning State involved us filming in National Archives in Wellington, The Parliament Building and the Parliament Library. Again, the pathway was cleared ahead of time for the filming and all permissions and any protocol adhered to.