

# DATAVIDEO DV BANK

Drive That Acts like a Tape Deck Provides Improved Workflow for Video Editors

BY BEN LONG

DV cameras provide an easier production workflow than any previous video technology. But despite the power of digital editing, tape can still be a hassle. That's where Datavideo's DV Bank comes in. The DV Bank is an external FireWire hard drive that allows you to capture video from a DV camera or deck without using a computer. Although it's not a replacement for a tape deck, the DV Bank and its accessories provide a number of unique capabilities, including time-lapse photography and automated playback, and it can reduce wear and tear on your DV camera or deck. What's more, it gives you instant random access to all of your media, a great time-saver when you're on location.

## For the Record

Available with a capacity of 60GB (\$1,100) or 120GB (\$1,180), the DV Bank looks like a normal FireWire drive that has an LCD screen and standard transport controls on its face. The 60GB unit can record 4.5 hours of footage; the 120GB, 9 hours. The DV Bank provides 99 tracks, and the amount of video you can record into each is limited only by the size of your drive.

You record video to the DV Bank just as you'd record to any other DV deck. Simply plug in your camera via the FireWire port (either six- or four-pin), press the record and play buttons on the DV Bank, and let it rip. There's no need for a computer or any special software. The DV Bank captures and stores the video just as your computer would if you were using the capture facility of a video-editing program.

## Instant Gratification

Once you've captured your video, you can quickly move to any track and play it back. To see your footage, you'll need to connect the DV Bank via FireWire to your DV camera or deck. Because the device is recording to a hard drive rather than to tape, you have instant random access to all of your captured footage.

To get the captured footage into your Mac for editing, you treat the DV Bank just like any other camera or deck and use your editing program's capturing facility to grab the clips you want. Unfortunately, there's no way to simply copy the captured media to your Mac; the process takes place in real time. This is the DV Bank's biggest weak-



ness, but Datavideo claims that the next generation will be able to copy directly.

The DV Bank obviously adds an extra step, but it has a number of uses. On the set, its immediate feedback allows you to quickly review a take without having to rewind your tape and risk breaking your time code. In postproduction, you can simply dump an entire tape to the DV Bank and then log and capture from there, limiting the amount of abuse your deck takes. And the DV Bank's ability to loop a track lets you set up a kiosk in which you can have unattended playback that doesn't require lengthy rewinding.

## Loaded with Options

Datavideo's optional \$499 Intervalometer allows you to use the DV Bank to shoot time-lapse videos. With the Intervalometer, you can grab individual frames from your camera and move them to the DV Bank, using any interval you want. For shooting time-lapse, creating stop-motion animation, or shooting single frames, the DV Bank and Intervalometer combo is an ideal solution.

Other DV Bank accessories include a DC converter for running off a car cigarette lighter, and converter boxes for capturing from S-Video or YUV analog sources.

## Macworld's Buying Advice

The DV Bank isn't for everyone. It's much more expensive than an external drive with an equivalent capacity, and it requires a somewhat different workflow. But for videographers who need an additional capturing facility or time-lapse capability, this sturdy, well-designed machine is a great tool. □

**RATING:** ●●●½

**PROS:** Intuitive interface; instant random access to all of your captured footage.

**CONS:** Brings transferred footage into your Mac in real time instead of doing a straight file copy.

**PRICE:** 60GB, \$1,100; 120GB, \$1,180

**OS COMPATIBILITY:** Mac OS 9, Mac OS X

**COMPANY:** Datavideo, 562/696-2324, [www.datavideo-tek.com](http://www.datavideo-tek.com)