



CAPTURING ON-LINE QUALITY VIDEO

Many people think of *on-line editing* as an output process, but to get “on-line” quality, you have to be very diligent in how you capture your media. If you are eager to start editing, you can go ahead and batch capture according to the procedure described above, and start cutting. But at some point before your final output, you’ll want to go back and re-capture your video at the highest-quality. This means you’ll probably need to forgo the convenience of batch capturing, and capture each clip with custom settings. If you’re using a system with multiple resolutions, you’ll need to switch to a higher quality setting. Because you’ve already logged each scene, the computer knows where each clip is on each tape. You’ll simply need to adjust the settings and re-capture.

CAREFUL CAPTURING

To get the best quality, you must carefully set the video levels for every scene and/or lighting change (unlike before where you applied uniform levels to the entire tape). If the color bars on your tape were recorded by the same camera that you used for shooting, then they’re probably an accurate reference for setting video levels. If the tapes were “striped” with bars and tone using another deck or camera, you’ll be able to achieve a ballpark estimation of correct video and audio. See the sidebar below for details.

Doing the work to capture at “on-line” quality can be tedious and boring. You’ll need to very closely watch your video as it goes into your computer to make sure there aren’t any glitches, drop-outs or other problems. You’ll also want to listen for glitches and distortion in your audio. See Chapter 10 for more on audio levels. Your diligence will pay off in your final output.

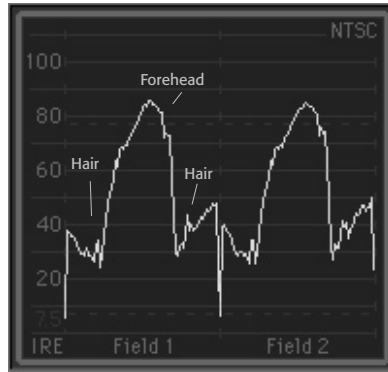
Setting video levels without bars

If you set the video levels using the color bars at the head of your tape, as explained above, you’ve probably got your video levels into the right ballpark. For greater accuracy, you’ll want to set them using the footage itself. To do this, go to the scene you are logging and look for a shot with good black areas. Use these black areas to set your black level. Unfortunately, your waveform will not show the neat stair-stepping of the color bars test pattern and not all images will have true black and white areas. Deciphering the image on the waveform may take some getting used to at first. Color plate 06 shows a frame of video and Figure 12.09 shows its corresponding

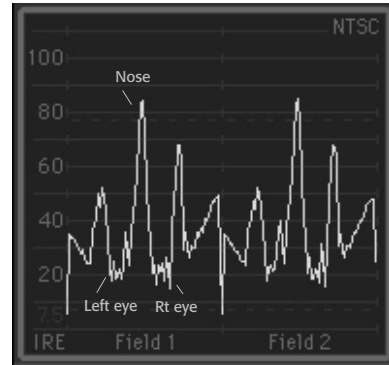


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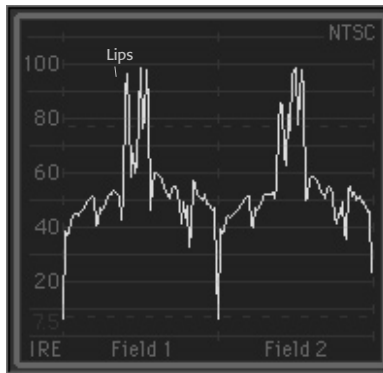
waveform images and vectorscope. Next, repeat this process with the white levels.



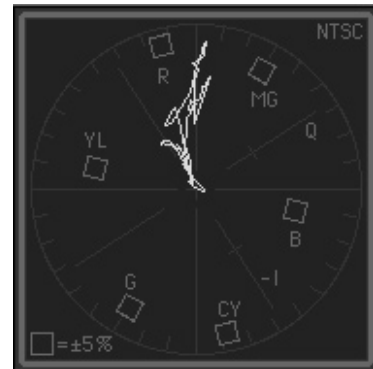
A. 2-field waveform of line 51, the mannequin's forehead is indicated by the bright curve in the middle of the waveform



B. 2-field waveform of line 125, the dark areas in the mannequin's eyes are almost black, her nose is quite bright.



C. 2-field waveform of line 205, the white spots on her lips are almost 100% white but note that the levels aren't clipping above the 100 IRE line.



D. This vectorscope of the mannequin shows that the image consist almost entirely of reds, yellows and magentas, reflecting the skin tones and pink wig.

Now take a look at the vectorscope. It will look something like the squiggly mess in Figure 12.09 If your scene involves people, your goal here is usually to adjust the hues to enhance skin tones. Find a close up of one of your actors and adjust the red and yellow color gain sliders until you think their skin tone looks its best. You may also want to correct any overall color imbalance in the video signal – if you think the whole image looks green, you can adjust it here. Color plate 07 & Figure 12.10 show an overexposed image. Color plate 08 and Figure 12.11 show an under lit image. One word of warning: although you can use the vectorscope sliders to create color effects, you'll have more control and flexibility if you use your NLEs



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brightness, contrast, saturation, hue and color gain effects filters to create these effects. It's always better to grab clean footage.

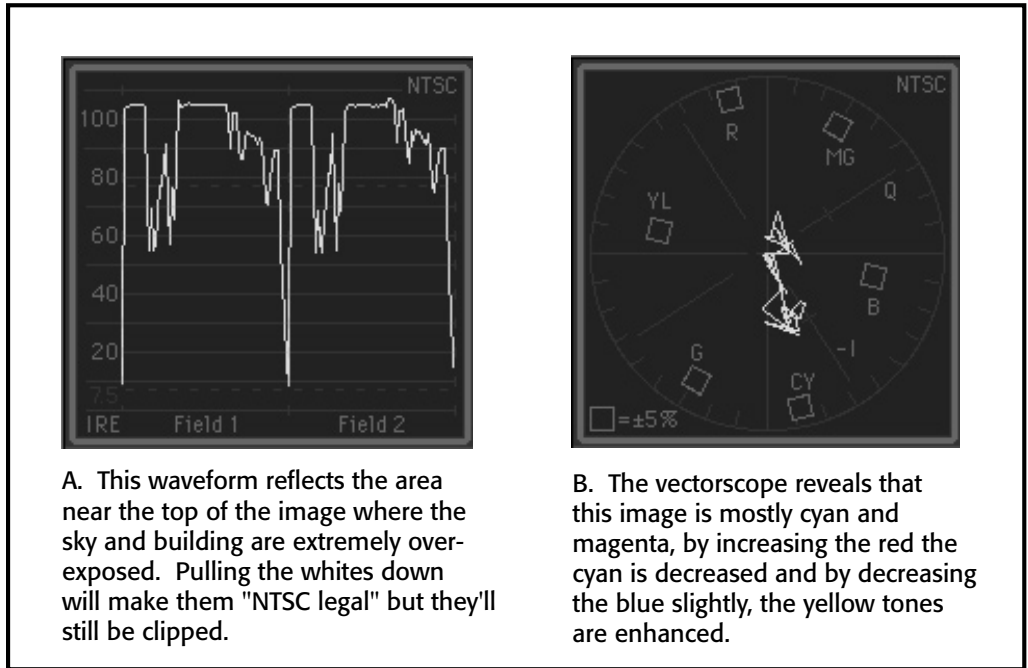


Figure 12.10

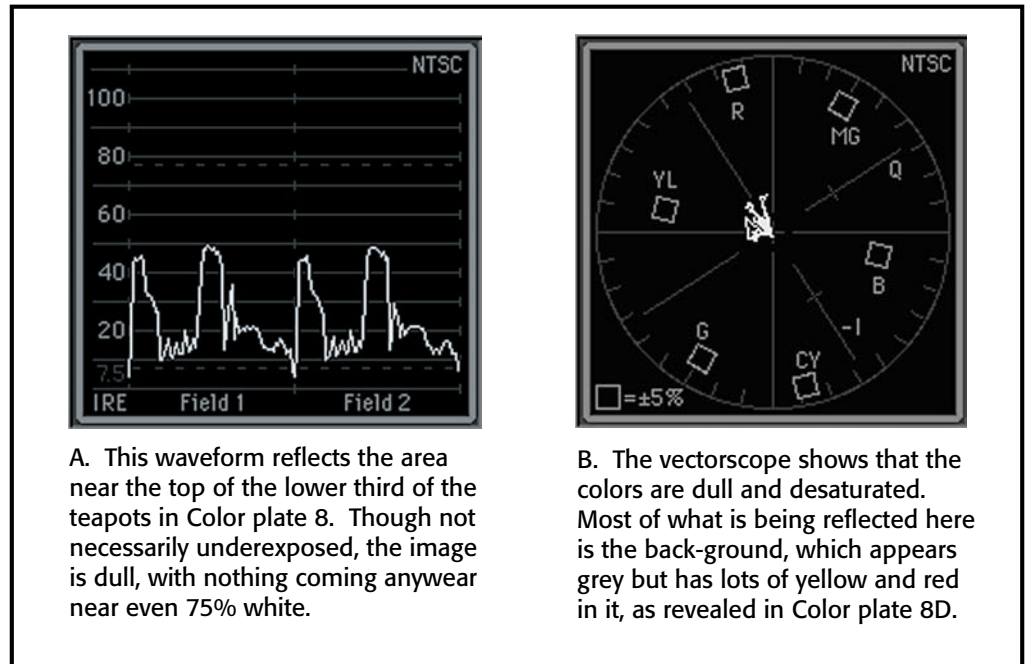


Figure 12.11

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If part of the squiggly line extends beyond the circle boundary, this indicates an oversaturated color that will probably be too much for NTSC video to handle, and will result in bleeding. In Color plate 09 & Figure 12.12, the line extends beyond the circular boundary near the red vector which indicates that there is oversaturated red in the image. Certain types of colored lights, like neon, often go beyond the legal NTSC color spectrum. (Color plate 10 & Figure 12.13) While you can try to take the edge off by adjusting gain, it's not likely that you'll have much success – if you shot it that way, it's there to stay. Trying to adjust the levels will just result in making the rest of the reds in the image look desaturated.

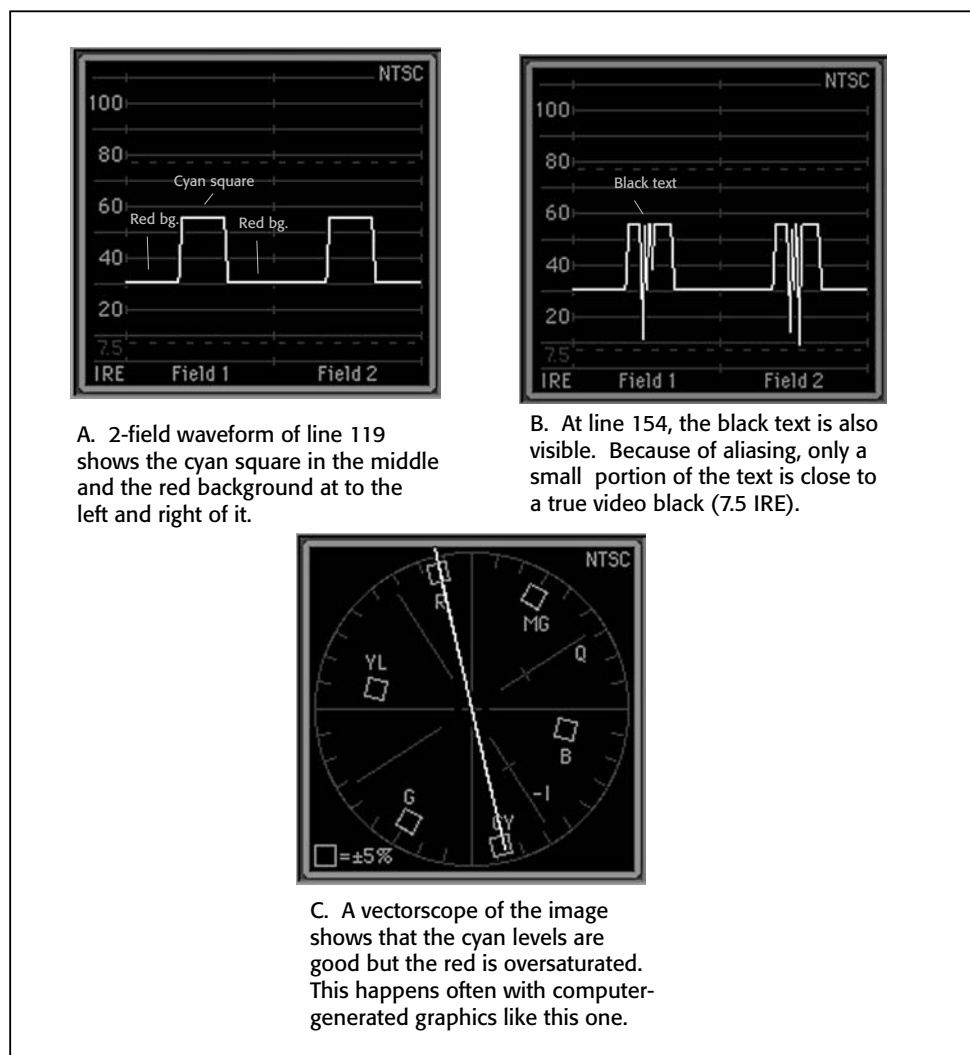


Figure 12.12



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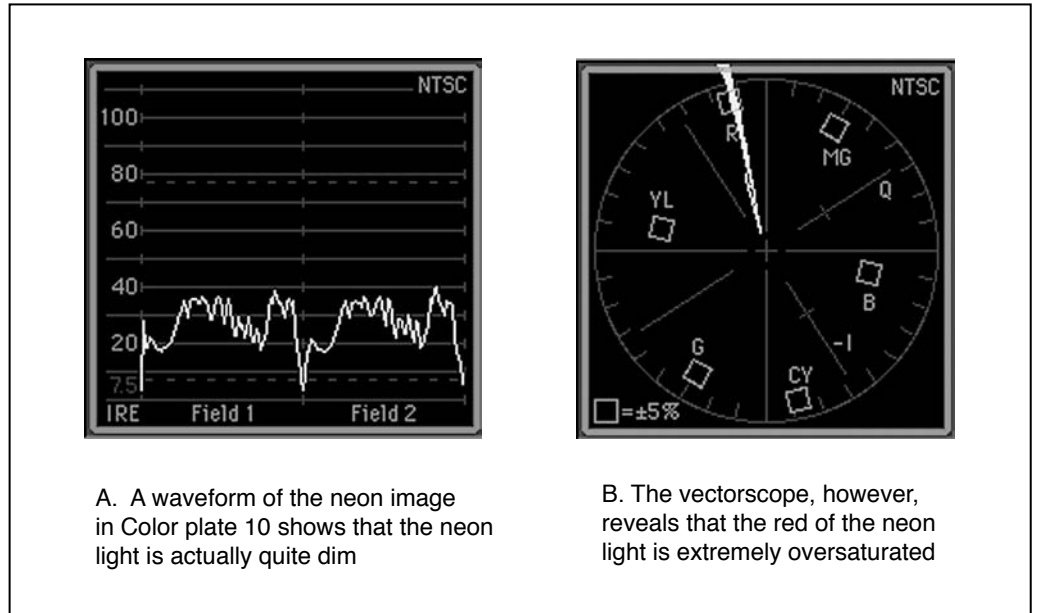


Figure 12.13

