

HOW TO TELL YOUR ORGANIZATION'S STORY WITH VIDEO

TOP 6 TIPS TO AVOID COSTLY MISTAKES

Here is your 2017 Guide to Making Videos



READ THESE TIPS FIRST

There are literally thousands of things that can go wrong during a video production. Unfortunately, the only way to learn how to avoid making bad videos is by simply making videos over and over again.

But do you have that kind of time and money? We didn't think so.

That's why we created this free tip sheet to making great videos...

Video Dads have produced hundreds of powerful videos for **universities**, **nonprofits**, and **businesses**. Along the way, we've trained thousands of people on how to make their own videos.

So without further ado, read on for the Top 6 tips to making videos about your organization or business.



WHO WE ARE

VIDEO DADS is made up of two dads with a humble mission to make world-class videos, while teaching others how to do the same.



Got a question? Email us anytime -

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WHO IS THIS FOR?



Universities

Are you looking to produce short, inspirational videos profiling students or departments?



Nonprofits

Do you hope to tell your organization's story and mission in a powerful video?



Businesses

Would you like to promote your business with authentic videos about your staff and clients?

6 Tips to Making Videos About Your People



1. HOW IS THE STORY TOLD?

What we hear in the video is actually more important than what we see. Here are a few ways of telling story in a video.

- **Narrated:** a professional voice tells the story with authority.
- **Scripted:** a person on screen recites memorized speech or reads a script from a camera teleprompter.
- **Interviewed:** an in-depth interview gets edited down into a natural sounding short story.
- **Music Video:** No story in the audio, just good visuals with a catchy music track and informational text on screen.



WE RECOMMEND

A solid interview, with a person looking directly into the camera, is by far the best approach to making videos that are inspirational and authentic.

However, the skill of the interviewer and the video editor is what makes or breaks this kind of video.



PRE PRODUCTION

Planning a video shoot ahead of time is the only way to ensure a smooth and fun video production, while staying within your timeframe and budget.

But, over planning can cost you much more time and money, and also sour the experience for everybody involved.

Don't sweat the small stuff!

Nail down the tips in this guide, and then enjoy the filmmaking experience.



2. HOW LONG SHOULD THE VIDEO BE?

As a rule of thumb, videos intended for the web need to be as short as possible, while still telling a complete story with emotion.

The actual duration can be determined by budget, number of people to appear in the video, and where the video will live.



WE RECOMMEND

In our experience, the ideal length for a nonprofit or corporate video should be about 4-5 minutes, featuring 3 people as subjects, and take 2-3 days to shoot.

But, your video campaign can have a lot more reach if you produce a series of short 2 minute videos, each featuring a different person and his or her story.

This is especially the case for a large organization like a university, which can choose from a wide variety of people to appear in a video campaign.

For the same production time, budget, and number of participants as a standard 4-5 minute video, you could make 3 videos at 90 seconds apiece. These become a lot more shareable online, and you can be flexible with the number of videos in the campaign, or add more to the series throughout the year.



ONE VIDEO

4-5 minutes - 3 subjects



VIDEO SERIES

Under 2 minutes per subject
At least 3 videos/subjects

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3. WHO WILL REPRESENT YOU?

Choosing the people who will represent your organization can be the most difficult decision during your video planning.

But, don't stress about it that much. Seriously. It's more about good video production, than it is about selecting the right person.

Last year we interviewed over 170 people for a variety of videos, and their edited video stories were quite different but equally inspiring.

The lesson? It's not about picking the most perfect candidate with the most insanely touching story. In fact, it's better to pick ordinary people with a variety of perspectives.

It's during the process of filmmaking - both shooting and editing - that ordinary people transform into inspirational video subjects.



WE RECOMMEND

Whether you're making a single video with multiple subjects, or a series of shorter videos each profiling a different person, you want to look for people who have:

- **Authenticity:** a person on the ground will always be more believable and inspirational than someone at the top.
- **Action:** a person who does something visually interesting will make a better video subject than a person with a particularly good story.
- **Diversity:** a well rounded video campaign should feature people of different age, gender, and backgrounds.



Universities

Current students and alumni, faculty, operations people



Nonprofits

Volunteers, board members, staff, program recipients



Businesses

Customers, vendors, non-marketing staff

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4. WHO/WHAT/WHERE/WHEN/WHY?

Once you have your subjects selected, the next step is to figure out as much logistics as you can possibly plan for in advance of the shoot day.

You'll need to schedule the shoot with the video subjects, **but avoid stressing them out with too many details or questions.**

It's up to the video producer to handle the production planning, enabling the subjects to have an enjoyable experience while remaining comfortable and natural in front of the camera.



WE RECOMMEND

- **Who:** try to schedule a shoot at a time when your subject is interacting with other people, but can also step aside for an extended interview.
- **What:** instead of forcing your subject to act unnaturally, plan the shoot around a time when they're already doing something particularly interesting visually.
- **Where:** a good 2-minute video should have at least 2-3 "scenes" or locations, to create action sequences in the edit. The interview also requires a quiet, private location indoors.
- **When:** schedule at least half a day for a shoot with your subject, to allow time for a solid interview, a ton of B-roll, as well as setup/breakdown and travel between shooting locations.
- **Why:** In the process of heavy details and technical planning, don't forget about your ultimate job, which is to make a captivating video about a person and their story, and how that ties into the larger picture for your business, nonprofit, or university.



5. WHERE TO UPLOAD THE VIDEO?

Once your video is completed, there are a few different approaches to uploading it to the web and sharing it with the world.

- **Youtube (or Vimeo):** The most common approach, the advantage is the video will live semi-permanently on Youtube and gain views over time.
- **Facebook:** Uploading the full video directly to Facebook will result in many more initial views, thanks to auto-play. The disadvantage is the video becomes difficult to find later down the road.

We recommend a mix of both: upload to Youtube or Vimeo for the video's permanent home and embeddable link, but share the video directly on Facebook when the video is released.



BOOSTING

Definitely boost a Facebook video with some ad dollars.

Even a little amount can give the video enough momentum to take off.

6 Tips to Making Videos About Your People



6. WHO WILL PRODUCE IT?

It all comes down to the big question: who is going to make your video?

You can tackle simple videos yourself, like donor or customer thank yous, with just your smartphone. But for videos that tell inspirational stories about people, most businesses, nonprofits, and universities hire one of the following producers:



THE DABBLER

Whether it's a friend, family member, or a coworker, chances are you know someone who has a decent camera and would love to take a stab at making a professional video.

Pro: It's cheap, with potentially decent results for projects like music videos without interviews.

Con: Complex projects can take up way more time than the apparent cost savings. And if the video ends up being lousy, you'll either have to hire someone to fix it or start from scratch.



THE VIDEOGRAPHER

A wedding or event videographer will have the gear and skill to execute a professional looking video, but you will need to provide the vision, direction and management.

Pro: Working with a video professional will yield more consistent results than tackling your organizational videos yourself or with an in-house volunteer.

Con: A videographer will look to you for the direction and project management, which can be difficult if you're unsure about the specifics or what is possible.

THE FULL SERVICE VIDEO PRODUCERS

A small team of dedicated video producers (hint: that's us!) specialize in creating your video from start to finish, including concept and story development, preproduction, shooting, and editing.

Pro: Extensive experience making short web videos for clients like you, which goes a long way in ensuring an efficient, enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

Con: We specialize in making videos, not designing websites or creating multiplatform marketing campaigns.



THE AD AGENCY



For major institutions, ad agencies can strategically roll out campaigns that involve not only video, but also print and radio/TV ads, promotional events, and long-term brand management.

Pro: They handle everything, from concept, planning, and production, to distribution and analysis.

Con: If you're only looking to make a short video, you're still paying the agency premium to manage the project. And often ad agencies end up outsourcing their video production to specialists like us.

Questions / Comments ?



THANK YOU!

We appreciate your taking the time to read through this guide, and we hope it'll be of use to you as you tackle this year's video projects.

Please feel free to get in touch if you have any questions about how to make great videos for your organization.

Thanks!
-Video Dads



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