

Commissioning and Creating **CORPORATE VIDEO**

How to Work With & Get the Best Results
from Your Video Production Company



Planning and Developing Your Project
Choosing the Right Media for Distribution
Managing the Production Process Effectively
Selecting and Implementing a Production Style
Using Video and Multimedia to Benefit Your Business





ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This booklet is a guide to planning, organizing and producing multimedia projects.

There are two main ways that the guide will assist you. Firstly it will give you a helpful “behind the scenes” look at the processes involved. This will enable you to make informed decisions about which type of media to use, the timescales to allow and how to allocate your budget.

Secondly it demonstrates the procedures followed at The Video Production House with any video project we undertake. This structured, step by step approach ensures that we work efficiently with our clients to produce packages that are imaginative, effective and affordable. Most importantly it shows how we can work in partnership with you to achieve your communication objectives.

The key to success in any project of this nature is planning. Prior to filming and editing, the thorough preparation of the concept, and the subsequent development of the script and storyboard are key to producing the most effective video for your needs.

These days there are more choices than ever before with regard to producing and distributing video and multimedia programs. It is important to carefully consider the options, so that your project realizes its full potential. We hope that this booklet will help you to do just that.

WHY USE VIDEO?

In order to be committed to producing the best possible project, you personally need to be convinced about how powerful and effective videos can be.

In today's media-driven market, a video presentation is still the most cost effective tool to show, explain, train, recruit, and sell.

A Harvard study demonstrated the following benefits of using video to promote goods or services:

- ✓ 90% of your prospects will view your message within 24 hours.
- ✓ They will gain a 51% better understanding of your offer.
- ✓ They will be 73% more likely to buy from you.

Video allows you to use dynamic visual and audio content to:

- ✓ Provide employees with proper training and communications
- ✓ Show your product or service being used properly
- ✓ Have your sales presentation seen in multiple places at the same time
- ✓ Send your sales message anywhere in the world for just a few dollars
- ✓ Be watched by your prospects. Often sales letters are not read
- ✓ Video allows your client to dynamically see the benefits of your offer
- ✓ Video lets your best salesperson sell worldwide

There are many more compelling reasons to use video in preference to brochures or other types of marketing materials:

- ✓ Video reduces your sales costs dramatically! You can save a fortune over traditional methods of advertising, such as brochures
- ✓ Research shows that people will not throw a video away because of its high perceived value. Plus, people share video with others!
- ✓ Currently, video is the most effective way to deliver a targeted message to U.S. businesses and consumers
- ✓ Response rates are often 300% to 600% higher than a print brochure
- ✓ Nearly 98% of American households have a VHS Video Recorder
- ✓ A colorfully packaged bulky video cuts through the clutter of the nearly 64 billion pieces of direct mail sent annually
- ✓ No commercials. Viewers watch your video without the clutter of commercials

A Wharton School of Business study showed nearly nine out of ten people receiving a video will watch within 24 hours of receiving it. Amazingly, most will remember receiving a video *months after the mailing*. Do you remember the print mail you received even yesterday?

The same study showed video increases memory retention by 50% over print. And video decreases the time needed to make a decision by 72%. There are other benefits too. Videocassettes have a high-perceived value, with most retail tapes selling for \$10-\$80 each.



Often clients find that when it comes to the bottom line, video is more efficient given its increased response rates.

Video offers numerous possibilities for leveraging sponsorships, delivering sales information, providing value to customers and prospects and creating stronger relationships with your target audience.

Video is the only way to deliver the clarity and power of television directly your target.

Video is a dynamic medium. Unlike a spoken presentation, video guarantees complete control over your message and the way that it is delivered. The message is consistent in that every time it is played it will be exactly the same. By contrast, in a live seminar or conference, a speaker who is not on top form may vary dramatically in the content and effectiveness of their presentation.

With video, ideas and information can be presented clearly and efficiently, while the visual nature of the format makes it a highly effective tool for communicating complex subjects and abstract ideas. Not only is video accessible and direct, most importantly, it is a familiar medium.

Video is also excellent for giving people a wider view and making them feel they have 'been there, seen that'. A video programme, for instance, can show events and people from the other side of the world, it can look inside things, it can create life-like models of machines and show how they work. It can do all this within a very condensed time frame. You can be in one place one moment and a split second later be somewhere else.

A well orchestrated video is a consistent and reliable resource; and with the advent of high speed internet and DVD, companies are able to distribute video quickly and more efficiently than ever before. You can even have your video made available for distribution

on a Palm type organiser, Pocket PC or a PDA. This will enable you to dramatically increase the exposure of your message and reach a continually expanding audience.

Whatever you want to achieve we'll work with you to build a creative video solution that meets all your project's objectives. At The Video Production House our goal is the successful realisation of your ideas in their most powerful form.

Here are some specific ways that we currently use video to help our clients meet their needs. You may be surprised at the enormous potential that video has to solve the communication challenges in your business...

If you use any kind of sales letter, brochure, or newsletter, you can communicate your product, services and news far more effectively with a video. Don't just think VHS anymore – you can distribute the video on your web site, on PDA's, on CD's and DVD's to post to clients.

Do visitors wait in your reception area? They are a captive audience so keep them entertained with an interesting and entertaining video about your company.

Do you organise live events and want to keep a record of them? Award ceremonies, client events, road- shows, shareholder meetings and promotional tours can all be recorded for later evaluation.

Likewise, if you hold seminars, you can record them and place them on your web site or mail them out on CD to those who could not attend.

If you are involved in training, video is the ideal way to distribute any training that needs to be carried out regularly. This frees up staff and is a more cost effective solution.

Training could be in the form of:

Induction programmes for new staff

Training dealers on a new product's sales features

Training field maintenance engineers on servicing new products

Training staff on standards of health and safety or customer service

Product training for sales teams

Do you exhibit at trade shows? A high quality promotional video about your company's products or services can loop continuously, attracting visitors into your stand, educating them and persuading them to buy. We can even film this in High Definition for you to display on a Plasma screen or projector for the highest possible impact.

Do you regularly recruit new staff and need a way of quickly bringing them up to speed with your company's mode of operation, safety in the workplace, sales techniques and so on? Video is the ideal medium. Again, this frees up staff members who would otherwise have to 'manually' take each new employee through these processes.



Do you have a new product or service to introduce to the marketplace, to your distributors, or to the sales force? Video allows you to efficiently demonstrate the features and benefits of the new offering.

Does your CEO or other Directors find it difficult to communicate messages across the workforce? Executive broadcast Videos are an increasingly popular format where a busy CEO or director of a large company needs to communicate in a personal manner to an audience across the state, country or even internationally.

Rather than incurring high costs and lost time by travelling to deliver the message, we can come to the Directors office and film him presenting the message 'to camera', with an autocue if desired. The message can then be easily distributed in a variety of formats to suit the circumstances.

Executive Broadcast Videos have many applications:

A welcome message to new staff, or for an event or conference

Announcing a major change within the organisation

Communicating management strategy and vision to employees

Communicating core values to customers

Communicating price sensitive announcements to city institutions, analysts and the press

THE PROCESS

Although getting your own video production project underway may seem overwhelming at first, the entire process can actually be broken down into three simple phases. They are pre-production, production and post-production.

1. Pre-production: This is the planning and co-ordination phase. It includes choosing a location and writing a script. It is also the most important phase because this is when all the creative decisions are made about the styles and techniques to be used to convey the information in a lively, informative and entertaining way.

2. Production: This is when the actual videotaping, either on location or in our studio, occurs. Still photos, stock footage and music are collected and prepared at this stage. Narration and music recording, as well as the development of graphics and animation, are also part of the production phase.

3. Post-production: Editing, audio mixing and inserting of titles and special effects take place in this phase. If DVD's are involved then the DVD menu system will be designed and authored. The same applies for other interactive multimedia presentations. Post-production also includes duplication, packaging and fulfillment.

Before starting your project, it is necessary that you assign one person to serve as your "Approval Person" for the production. This person will have the authority to give final approval for each phase of the production process related to program content.

If the project involves complicated technical and/or specialized content, you will need to assign a person to serve as your "Content Expert" - or as they say in the movies, "Supervising Technical Consultant," to make sure each content area is accurately covered. This person should obviously be very familiar with the product or service that is being promoted, or the details of whatever the subject matter may be.

PRE-PRODUCTION

When you commission a video project, there are a number of questions that need answering at the outset. Let's discuss these and help you to see why they are important:

What is the *primary* purpose of the Video?

Get the need for the video clear in your mind. Is it to make sales and thus be more profitable? Is it to save money by reducing the time that your technical personnel currently spend assisting customers? Is it to reduce accidents or safeguard you from expensive litigation? Is it to build awareness of your products or services? Is it to appeal to a new market in order to build a client base within that market? Is it to educate and inform?

When we meet for the first time, we'll need you to tell us this information. This is often known as 'the brief'. It gives the producer a clear notion of what the programme is

supposed to accomplish. Prior to this meeting you will find it helpful to discuss the concept with your colleagues, and even some potential users of the programme. Their ideas (and objections) may be useful in defining the direction and approach of the video.

You should be able to state the primary purpose of the video in a single sentence. If you can't do that, you may be trying to cram too much into it. Go back and think about the *primary* purpose. It's important not to get bogged down with details when writing the brief, otherwise the main thrust of the project may get lost. Aim for your brief to be about a single page in length.

Who will it be distributed to (the audience)?

Obviously you are not making the video for yourself. Who are the target audience? Try and be as specific as possible. When you think about that audience, ask yourself how interested they are likely to be in what you want to show. How much do they already know about the subject? What is their background, language, comprehension ability, and general interest in your specialist field? The aim of course is to make a video that they will want to watch.

How and where will the Video be shown?

It's a waste of time making a video if it never gets shown, and the way in which it will be shown will influence its design. There is little point in creating a package or program that nobody can watch because it is distributed in the wrong format or because playback equipment is not available. For example, if it is decided to distribute it in widescreen format in a cinema - that needs to be taken into consideration early on so that the right equipment is used to produce the video. If the video will receive widespread distribution via VHS or DVD, have you accounted for the cost of producing and sending the copies?





For some projects VHS may be the best distribution medium, for others DVD, web video, VideoCD, video for a PDA or a professional format such as HD might be preferable. At the *Video Production House* we can help you decide on the most suitable format.

What are the objectives of the Video?

This is a key question. Remember that objectives are not vague aims such as "The video should be interesting and improve the image of the company". Objectives are specific and measurable. For example, "The video should give prospective customers confidence in our company, demonstrate the value of our service and encourage them to try our special offer."

Another objective might be, "Overcome prejudice and negative perceptions of our company by uninformed activists." Once objectives are clearly spelt out, it becomes much easier to plan the details of the video and eliminate elements that serve no real purpose. In essence then, the objective relates to *what you as the commissioner of the video want to achieve.*

What is the key message?

However many different sections there are in a video, there is usually one key message that you are really trying to get across, and that's all that the audience can absorb at a single viewing. You will fail altogether if you try to achieve too much. You may be saying "We offer the best value for money compared to our competitors.", or "A few moments of carelessness can cost you your life." Be very clear what your key message is and ensure that everything about the video contributes to this message. The key message relates to *how you want the audience to benefit from the video.*

What approach are you going to use?

How best can you communicate your message? Will you use a documentary style, drama, humor? Should the program be sensitive and factual, light-hearted and lively, conservative in its approach, or should it have a more modern, trendy feel? Should the video be 'presenter led' to give your audience someone to identify with? Or would it be helpful to have a celebrity voice-over to lend it authority? Perhaps a documentary approach would add credibility?

It might be that adopting an 'MTV' style will ensure it appeals to a young audience. Will there be a need for extensive animation? Will the filming take place on location or in a studio, or a combination of both? There are many more styles and combinations of style that can be considered. Think about your company, your message, and of course most of all, your audience.

In broad terms, think about trying to get a balance between 'information' and 'persuasion'. Ask yourself, do you primarily need to appeal to the audience's intellect or do you want to reach them emotionally? A general rule is that the more information you give, the drier and less persuasive the communication can be. Of course, the opposite is true, too.

As an example, at one end of the spectrum is the instruction manual. It doesn't try to persuade the user to buy the product, it simply *tells them* what to do with it.

Conversely, with advertising, which we might say is at the other end of the spectrum, the emphasis is geared towards *persuading* viewers to want to buy the product.

What will be the structure of the program?

Having decided on the key message and treatment, it is usually not difficult to come up with the structure - the main sections of the program. A typical format might be:

1. **Musical Introduction Sequence** showing intriguing high-tech glimpses of the new product.
2. **Brief Overview** of the history of the company leading to the development of the new product.
3. **The Benefits** of the new product.
4. **The Upgrade Path** and future benefits.
5. **Bullet Point Summary** of the Benefits.
6. **Call to action.** What viewers should do next.

What personnel are available to work on the project?



It is no use planning to allocate your staff to producing a video if they are already over-stretched with other work. Make a realistic plan which allows someone in the company some quality time to manage the project, and have a clear idea how the responsibilities will be divided between your staff and the video production company. Someone might be assigned to coordinating communication between different departments in the company. Another

person may be required to work on script development. . Yet another person may be given the task of budgeting and accounting. The larger the scale of the project, the more people you will need to be involved. Whatever the case, it will be frustrating to all parties if this is not agreed beforehand or if individuals do not realize what their responsibilities are.

How can I be sure that the video will convey the right message?

For most projects you will be drawing on the collective expertise of a team of people both within your company and from the Video Production House. Each person will be involved at different stages in the project and their efforts need to be coordinated. At the same time you need to be kept up-to-date and involved in the decision-making at appropriate points in the process. This is the job of the producer at the Video Production House. They will work with you to assemble and organize the resources needed to put your production together as planned.

Working with your producer is very much collaboration. The producer is there to help and guide, not to take over or insist on things being done a certain way. You contribute your knowledge of your organization and the purpose to which the program will be put. The producer in return, uses his or her experience and skill to create an end product that will work.

Again, let us emphasize that this method of working does not entail handing your project over and losing control of it. In working alongside a producer you maintain a high degree of direction over the end-product. It's the producer's role to present you with the options at every stage of the production, explain them to you, and let you decide. If they genuinely feel that a decision will be detrimental to the success of the project then they will of course let you know about that and discuss the reasons why.

Ultimately, your understanding of the audience, and the producer's ability to communicate with them through the chosen medium, are the keys to an effective production. To achieve this rapport with your audience, you and the producer will need to work together throughout the production process. This guide will help you to play your part in that successful collaboration.

How long will it take?



The production of an audio-visual project can be a lengthy process. With video, a full day of shooting may only yield a minute or two of suitable material for the final tape, particularly if it involves many different shots, locations or set-ups. Similarly, a day can quite easily be spent in the edit suite assembling a relatively short sequence. Of course, not all productions are that time-consuming, but a more complex production can take weeks, even months. So the earlier you can start, particularly on the pre-production, the better.

How much will it cost?

There is never a simple answer to this question. Of course, in the end what matters is how, and where the program is seen, and what the audience get out of it. The first stage of any production is defining what you would like the program to do, and what level of budget you would consider allocating to achieve those objectives.

There are many variables in the costing of a video program. The same subject matter could be covered in two different ways for substantially different costs. This is why the starting point has to be **your budget**. We can guide you and show you what you would receive (and achieve) for varying budget amounts.

In many cases a simple and straightforward program can be as effective as a complex and expensive one. So you may be able to achieve your objectives with a well-made but relatively inexpensive production. This is our specialty at ***The Video Production House.***

Payment terms vary from producer to producer, but a common breakdown is that one-third of the total budget will be payable on acceptance of the proposal, one-third payable

on completion of shooting and the final third payable on acceptance of the completed programme.

What additional material is available?

You, your suppliers, or even your customers, may already have video footage that you will be able to incorporate into the video to improve it and/or save cost. If your company is part of a larger group, be sure to ask the parent company if they have any materials that could be used. Additionally, gather other artwork, brochures and photographs that could be incorporated into the video.

What image does your company portray in it's existing logo, marketing materials etc?

It is important that the video that we produced is in keeping with the rest of your corporate image. All elements of your image should be unified. For example, do you serve high end financial institutions? Or does your company follow a 'pile it high, sell it cheap' philosophy? Whatever the case, the video needs to be in tune with your existing materials and corporate image.

What is the intended 'shelf life' of the Video?

In most cases you want to get as much use as possible from the video. Anticipate changes that may make the video out of date such as a new corporate branding that will come on stream in the next few months, or a new product that is almost ready to launch. In the script you will want to leave out any phrases that that will make the video seem dated in a few years time. Of course, it is relatively easy to update sections of the video at a later date if necessary, and if you believe that regular revisions will be needed to keep the video current, then be sure to budget for them.

What is the completion deadline?

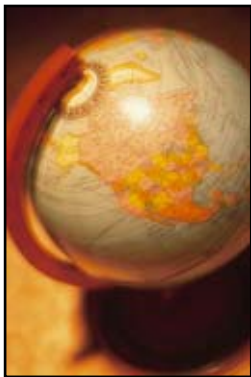
Is there a specific date that you need to have the video completed by? For example, it could be for an annual meeting, a major exhibition and so on. Once a date is established, a production schedule can be planned in order to fulfill that requirement.

What will be the duration of the Video?

In corporate videos a longer program is usually not a better program. The aim is to achieve the objectives *in the shortest possible time*. Put yourself in the position of your audience once more. Would you want to watch a corporate video for any longer than necessary? In most cases, the video will be communication not entertainment, so be aware of that if you are tempted to make the video longer.

Will any other material be used to accompany your commission?

When your video is distributed, do you plan to provide the audience with just the video on its own, or will there be associated materials such as an order form, a brochure, fact sheet, introduction letter and so on? If such items are to be used, they need to be coordinated with the video so that all elements are in harmony, both in design and content. For example, if including an order form, it may be appropriate to make reference to it in the video, encouraging viewers to "complete the enclosed order form."



Will you need different versions - foreign languages, a short version or long version, for example?

One of the great things about video is that it is a versatile medium. If necessary, with minimum additional expense we can create different length versions of the same video, or different versions tailored to different markets. For example, you may wish to have a short version of the video for existing customers who are already acquainted with your company, and a long version that spends more time establishing credibility. From footage captured at the same time, both videos

can be produced. Likewise it is also possible to dub different language versions or produce versions with a script that is tailored for a very niche audience such as insurance brokers, government officials, doctors, and so on. A message that is targeted at a specific audience is far more powerful than a general one that tries to deliver the program to people with widespread interests.

What Health & Safety issues need to be considered, both for those in front of the camera and the crew behind it?

If it is likely that filming will need to take place in a public place or in a facility that has hazardous materials, the health and safety implications need to be fully understood and appropriate action taken well in advance of the filming.

Are any special permissions/access required before filming takes place?

Many locations will require special permission or access to be granted before filming can take place. Such permissions might be from within the company, from local authorities, police, government or another company. Such permissions should be sought well in advance of time, and we can work with you to obtain the permissions for each location.

Don't worry if you can't answer all the questions immediately. The Video Production House are happy to advise you on the best way to present your message and suggest alternative treatments and formats.

Scriptwriting/Script Consultation

Just as architects rely on blueprints, a script for your video production is essential. Video production is a highly skilled and detailed process and without a carefully designed script, your project could end up costing more than expected, and be less successful in conveying your message. The script not only includes the talent's lines, it also plots out all the visuals (such as camera angles), and contains the creative elements (like special

effects) that will hold the attention of the audience. The script is the master plan for the actual production work.

Scriptwriting for video is different from other forms of writing. As opposed to a message on audiotape, the video script message is carried through the visuals rather than the words. Research studies have shown that people learn faster and remember more of what they learned when the material is presented to them visually.

If you chose to write your own script, we can provide script consultation, and give you suggestions on how to write effectively for video. On the other hand, we'd welcome the opportunity to provide you with a script, as we are experts in this field and we know how to produce scripts that are persuasive, relevant and powerfully motivating.

Like the production process itself, there are several steps in developing a good video script:

1. Research: Gathering and using printed information, site visits and interviews with technical advisors, employees and even customers.
2. The Treatment: This is a condensed version of the script, describing, in a general way, what will be seen and heard. The treatment will need to get the green light from your "Approval Person," before we move on to...
3. The Rough Script: Just as the name implies, the rough script is a draft, which will explain, in detail, the look and feel of the finished project. Like the treatment, the rough script is subject to approval.
4. The Final Script: Once all of the additions and/or revisions from the rough script have been approved, the result is the final script which will be closely followed in the production phase.

Preliminary Budget/Bid: Once we have assessed your project needs - usually after one or two meetings, we can provide you with a preliminary budget estimate. When the details of your project are determined, such as number of locations; production days; special effects; graphics; and editing requirements, as well as the need for professional talent or narration, we can submit a bid to you. If the proposed project is very complex, it may not be possible to submit a final budget until the actual script is complete.

If the scriptwriting is being handled within your company, we may charge on an hourly or daily basis for our production services. This is an alternative option if you possess the necessary skills in house, or are operating on a very tight budget.

If you approve our proposal and budget, we will draw up an industry standard contract which clearly sets out how we will work together to achieve your desired result.

One of the advantages of working with *The Video Production House* is that we are able to harness new technologies to produce a broadcast quality production at approximately half the cost of traditional production companies.

Once you have placed your commission with us, whatever you are aiming to communicate, we guarantee to work hard to ensure it is a complete success and will take immense pride in the final product we deliver to you.



PRODUCTION

While it is not necessary for you to have a detailed knowledge of the filming and production stage, it will be helpful to be acquainted with what is involved, as an overview. Don't get bogged down with all the technical details, this is where the Producer and film crew come into their own.

If you are unsure of why something is being done a certain way, or simply don't understand a particular process (and would like to) please do not hesitate to ask.

There are two main areas in which different types of media are used – production and playback. As an example, it might be that broadcast video footage and computer generated graphics may have been used for the production whereas the finished presentation may be stored on computer, the film shown on a video projector at an exhibition, with DVD's available for the audience to take away with them. Through that entire process, numerous formats and types of media are used to accomplish the goal. For now, let's focus on the production formats.

Video Production Formats

With advances in technology, it is now possible to record video in numerous different formats. Why are there so many formats? As mentioned previously, different formats are more suitable for different circumstances. Sometimes size is an advantage – if it is necessary for the filming to be discreet, a small format (and hence camera) would be useful. Sometimes it is necessary to record very long sequences without changing a tape, such as when filming a conference seminar – in that case a format that allows you to use long tape lengths would be more suitable.

One of the most important factors with video filming is the quality of the captured footage. This will have a direct relation to the quality of the final product. Domestic formats, like VHS are very low quality. Since most of the population have a VHS player however, it is a convenient and cost-effective for playback, but it is not a suitable for filming or editing.

Betacam SP is another analogue format that is widely used for production work, particularly documentaries. The format uses a small cassette, with a ½ inch tape that runs at high speed. Although the captured footage is 'component' meaning the picture is split into its component colors of red, green and blue, there will be some deterioration over successive generations of copying. Having said that, the format is widely used by TV stations where there is no need to produce multiple generations, and it is often used for high quality playback, for example at a live event where a video is being shown on a large screen

Digital technology is now the way to go for capturing footage. Digital Video formats (DV for short) include Mini DV, DV, DVCAM and DVC Pro. Mini DV tapes are the smallest, being about the size of a business card. DV, DVCAM and DVC Pro tapes are slightly larger than the size of an audio cassette.

The quality of DV is excellent and has a significant advantage that throughout the production and editing process no degradation in the quality will be experienced.

The latest development in the world of video production and TV is High Definition (HD for short). This is the single most significant change to happen in the world of TV since we went from black and white to color. HD is a new standard of video reproduction that will eventually replace what most people have in their homes today. This process has already started, with plasma screens, projectors, LCD screens and other HDTV compatible devices being sold as the new standard.

There are a number of reasons why HD is so much better than other formats. Firstly, the picture is always widescreen. Most people agree that the cinema experience is the ultimate way to view a film, and until recently, consumers have not been able to do that because our TV screens were almost square. Advocates of widescreen also argue that our natural field of vision in the “real world” is wide rather than square.

The second major difference with HD is the picture quality. The name itself (*high definition*) alludes to this. HD images are roughly four times more detailed than traditional TV pictures. This means a detail and clarity unlike anything you have ever seen before. It is not uncommon to hear viewers liken watching HD to looking through a window, such is the realism.

The other major difference with HD is digital sound quality. HD has the ability to include high quality multi channel surround sound as standard. This greatly enhances the viewing experience.

Of course, all these benefits come at a price. It is significantly more expensive to film and edit in HD. Many projects will not require this for the time being, but bear in mind that if your intention is to use a video for a lengthy period of a few years (or longer), HD may be the way to go in order to ‘future proof’ your content.

The Video Production House work with all the formats described. Whatever format is chosen, you can be sure that we will endeavor to assure your satisfaction in the final result.

Once the final script is approved, we'll work together to set up a production schedule. This includes specific arrival times at all locations, and the names of all the people who will be involved.

You may be surprised to see how much time is required to set up a scene. Bear in mind that a good production is the direct result of creativity and craftsmanship, and rushing the job usually adversely affects the final results. Understanding this will help you bear with us while we set up our equipment, check and recheck audio and video levels, and we often need to shoot a scene from several different angles. We also know that appearing on camera can be a nerve-racking experience for some (and a thrill-a-minute for others), so we'll help you and your employees relax in front of the camera, to bring out the best in everyone.

With our digital equipment and highly experienced staff, we can create high-quality animated logos, titles and diagrams to help convey your message. Such graphics may or may not be required, depending on the project, but if included they are time consuming to put together so they will be part of the production process.

Shooting

Shooting involves gathering all of the live footage that is required for the production.

In order to look and sound good, the technical process involved requires

experience, creativity and professional equipment. Your experience is also valuable at this stage to ensure that the captured footage accurately fulfills the brief. For example, if an employee of your company is being interviewed, you will be aware of what points you want them to cover, and you will also be able to immediately flag up potential problems, perhaps if the interviewee says something that you do not want included.



If the shoot will cover multiple consecutive days, it is common practice to view the days filming each day, known as the 'rushes'. Be aware that the rushes will contain lots of unusable footage, they may appear out of a logical order, and there will be many takes of

the same scene. This is standard practice and what matters is that single shot where everything came together just right to make the scene work.

POST-PRODUCTION

After the filming is complete and the graphics and other elements have been sourced and prepared, the time comes to put it all together. This is known as post-production and it includes the editing, which is the most lengthy part of the process.

Logging and Capturing: During the first phase of the editing process, we log (or index) for reference, all the footage we've just filmed. We will also capture the raw footage into the computer so that is ready to be edited.

Editing: In the past, it was common practice to divide the editing into two stages, offline and online. This was due to a number of reasons related to the cost of using post-production facilities as well as the enormous computer storage capacity that was required. In more recent times, it is more common for the editing to be carried out in one stage, because equipment costs have dropped and storage mediums have a far greater capacity than before.

During the editing process, the video is gradually fine tuned to turn into the finished production. First is the creation of the video equivalent of a rough draft. At this stage we'll decide on the exact placement of music and narration, and the overall flow of the project will start to take shape. This is known as a "rough cut." The editing of your "rough cut" allows us to take more time with decisions when making the final edit. Before the final edit is made there it may be necessary to develop several more rough edits for progressively revising, fine tuning and polishing your project.

The editing stage is also when audio mixing, color correction of scenes, insertion of titles, graphics and animation, as well as special effects and transitions occur.

Sound Post Production

Sound is an essential component of your production. If you need any confirmation of its value, simply watch a scene from one of your favourite films with the sound turned off. You will find that the scene loses much of its impact as a result.

Included in sound will be ambient sounds of the location which may or may not be highlighted within any particular scene, then there is the voices of anyone we see talking on the screen – it's vital that they are heard properly. Sometimes sound effects are added as a special effect to enhance the scene in some way.

There might also be a narrative soundtrack or voiceover which is added in during the editing. Such voiceovers may even be in numerous languages, all of which can be stored digitally and easily recalled by our editor. Lastly, don't forget music, which has enormous power to sway emotions.

Wise choice of a music soundtrack can contribute greatly to the success of your video. Since music has the most variables attached to it, let's consider it in more detail.



Music

Since the composer or writer of any piece of music owns the copyright, permission has to be sought, and there are often fees to be paid as a royalty. Depending on the music concerned, this can be a lengthy, complicated process of negotiation. An alternative is to use library music. This is music that has been specially created for use on videos and films. TV shows use this kind of music all the time.

Note that just because the composer is unknown, it does not mean the quality of the music is substandard. To the contrary, there is a vast selection of every type of music available, and even many well known composers assume pseudonyms to create it. Of course, fees are still payable, but the cost is invariably substantially lower, and the process to obtain clearance to use it is straightforward.

All these audio production elements that we just mentioned need to be edited and mixed to the right balance so as to complement the images rather than distract from them. With digital facilities, this process has become much more accurate and allows wider creative input.

Ultimately, your finished project can be viewed in the edit suite or at another location of your choice.

Editing is another process where there is a balance to be had between creativity and the following of established principles and rules. How can you best work with an editor? While it is tempting to point out what seems to be an oversight or error by the editor at an early stage, usually it is best to wait until they invite you to view a sequence in its entirety before making such an observation. Of course, the editor encourages your feedback and direction, but at the same time it will be frustrating to him (or her) if the workflow is continually interrupted before each sequence is ready for evaluation. By the same token, at the appropriate time, do not hold back from expressing what you particularly like or dislike. With video, it is not difficult to move footage around or style a scene in an alternative way.

Duplication and Distribution



We can make duplicate copies of your video using professional equipment with high technical standards. We use only hi-Grade tape in a Class "A" shell, and the highest rating CD and DVD discs for duplication into those formats. We also provide a wide range of packaging options-custom labels, cardboard sleeves in several stock colors, plastic library cases, custom-printed cardboard sleeves,

shrink-wrapping and mailers-even VHS tapes imprinted with your company name and logo! We can help design these if you like, or advise you on requirements if you prefer to handle this yourself. In addition, we can also provide both order processing and fulfilment services, as we do for numerous companies.

Distribution Formats

As with the production formats outlined previously, there are also many different media choices available for storing and replaying your programs. The choice depends on the requirements of the project.

For straightforward playback of a video program to the widest audience, the domestic video format VHS is still very popular. In cases where the video is being shown to a larger audience, perhaps using a video projector, it may be better to use a higher quality format such as DV.

CD-ROM is a convenient way of storing large amounts of data – around 700MB.

Presentations can be made and then copied onto a master CD-ROM with software that allows the presentation to be replayed, and then duplicated onto as many CD-ROM's as you like.

CD-ROM, like VHS is becoming almost universal because most people have access to a computer.



Another advantage with CD's is that they are probably the most inexpensive format to duplicate on a large scale. Both the cost of the physical disk and the cost of sending it will usually be cheaper than VHS. We can put a video onto a CD for you, to create what is known as a VideoCD. In addition to viewing the video on a computer, these discs will also usually play in many standalone consumer DVD layers.

DVD discs look like CDs but they are capable of holding far more information. This allows the discs to be used for very high quality video and audio. DVD-Video is designed for high-quality audio-visual playback, either from a DVD-Video player connected to a TV monitor or through a DVD-ROM drive on a computer.

One of the key benefits of DVD is that presentations can be made that can be played both on a standard TV screen and on a computer. This, coupled with the ability to play near-broadcast quality video and animation, makes DVD a significant advance on previous multimedia formats. The low cost of DVD players makes it an attractive choice for everything from kiosks and presentations to information stands in shops, receptions and at exhibitions.

A standard DVD holds 4.7GB of data (compared with around 650MB for a CD-ROM). However the more recent DVD recorders allow even more capacity, so don't worry about making your project fit, we can handle it!

On small quantities we recommend the use of DVD-R recordable discs for the widest compatibility. For quantities of 1000 or more, replication will be a better choice.

For replaying HD, the options are still in a state of flux. At the time of writing, it was possible to encode HD onto a regular DVD that could be replayed in a suitable computer. Also, D-VHS players can playback HD material, and these are relatively inexpensive to purchase. This would be a suitable format for an exhibition for example. When HD DVD becomes more widely available and costs come down, this will probably become the preferred distribution medium.

In some cases, it may be necessary to train your staff how to setup and use equipment needed to replay the video. We can help you with this, and also assist in sourcing equipment for purchase or rent where applicable.

Where do you go from here?

This short guide provides an overview of the process involved in making your video production. It's quite likely that you still have some questions even at this stage. Producing a professional quality, persuasive video requires specialist skills and experience, so we encourage you to contact us so that we can help you fulfill your needs.

If you have any questions relating to the video production process in general, or you would like to discuss ideas for a specific production, please call us anytime at **(888) 707 7595 or 714 541 5258**. You can also email us at: info@thevideoproductionhouse.com
We're happy to help!



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