

## Steps to a Successful Video Production

### Step I: Defining the Need

- A. Establish the purpose of the production
- B. Define the viewing audience.
- C. What feeling and information would you like to convey to viewers?
- D. Determine the key objective for the video?
  1. Will the production introduce your company, sell a product or service or train employees?
  2. There should be only one key objective with any others being secondary and supportive to that focus.

Once you have determined your objective, be aware of supportive key facts/points to support that objective. An experienced production company will come up with a creative way to convey your message.

### Step II: Determine the Following Criteria

- A. Amount available for your budget. Production costs are tailored to client needs. The budget is determined by your production needs and experience of the company.
- B. Finished length of the production. Most promotional videos should be 1 to 4 minutes; web videos, 1 to 3 minutes. Communication and educational videos are best at 10 to 15 minutes. Training videos can be longer.
- C. Who will develop the script - your company or the production company? If you write the script, expect the production company to review it for video production use. What looks good on paper often “sounds” different on screen.
- D. Will you need a professional on-camera talent or voice talent? Male or female? If you elect to use your staff, this may add to the production cost and time.
- E. Will the production require music or sound effects? Consult the production company for their best suggestions.
- F. Will the videotaping be on location, in a studio or both?
- G. One person should be selected to be the production coordinator. Determine who will be best suited for that function based on knowledge of the production needs, decision making authority and time available.
- H. Establish the completion date. The average production requires one to two months, but occasionally can be completed in as little time as one week, depending on the complexity of the project. Other productions can require more

than two months. Consult the production company and plan a reasonable amount of time.

### Step III: Selecting the Production Company

- A. Start by asking friends or business associates for referrals.
- B. Browse online and the phone book. Compare websites and phone book ads.
- C. Call a few companies to get a sense of your potential final selection.
- D. Know the specifics of your production needs and be prepared to share the details with prospective production companies.
- E. Find out:
  - ✓ How long the company has been in business
  - ✓ The types of production work the company has completed or its specialization
  - ✓ Contracts and terms of payment
  - ✓ Samples of their work
  - ✓ Referral list
- F. After you have called a few companies select three to go and visit or to initiate further contact.
- G. After visiting each for a consultation, if you determine all companies are favorable and comparable, you may wish to select the company you feel you can best work with.
- H. Make sure your contract explains in detail what you can expect from the production company as well as what you'll be expected to provide to the production company. Video production is a team collaboration.

### Step IV: Pre-Production

Once you've accepted the contract it's time to get to work. Pre-production is most important as it sets the stage for all aspects of production. This phase will require the most client involvement as there are many decisions to be made. A production meeting will be scheduled to determine key elements, concept and scheduling the production time line.

A script is developed based on all the information in your objectives (unless you'll be creating the script). The director will develop style and approach options for the project and the script begins to take shape.

A working script is created for videotaping. Frequently during videotaping additional "little gems" are discovered that may cause minor changes to the script.

After videotaping, you will receive one final draft for script approval. This is the time to make any changes as the script must be approved before moving to the next phase of production. Clients are part of the process at each stage of production to assure quality control. The production company will require client approval on the script prior to sending it to the voice talent or proceeding into the production phase. Sign-offs eliminate costly retakes.

Prior to videotaping a storyboard will be developed and presented for approval to ensure the visuals meet the needs of the script.

### Step V: Production

Production includes the actual recording of the video, be it on location or in a studio. The client contact is required to be present during all videotaping sessions.

### Step VI Post-Production

Post-production includes editing your video, developing graphics, recording narration (if necessary), selecting music and mastering the production.

### Step VII: Final Fulfillment and Duplication

Packaging, label content and duplications are determined.

Duplication and packaging of your production is the final stage. There are several options available for this step for packaging, etc. Duplications are normally a separate item rather than being included in the production costs.

We hope this information has been helpful. If you have questions that are not answered here, please let us know so we can add them. We hope to work with you on your next project!