YOUR

ULTIMATE GUIDE

TO

BUSINESS
VIDEO

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

WHY VIDEO?

The harsh reality is, these days, we're all doing more with less. Business development is no longer soley relegated to the sales team. With more and more of that business happening online, our companies' visual assets (read "video") can be a source of real revenue. Did you know, according to WebDAM, visual data is processed 60,000 times faster by the brain than text? And videos on landing pages increase engagement by 88%! It's hard to ignore the business development implications there! Video converts better than any other medium while building intrigue with your products and brand.

So whether you have been tasked with creating a video for your website, for internal communication or as a recruiting tool, be confident in the fact that video is the power tool that delivers. In an age of attention overload, video is easier to digest, highly memorable and inherently more shareable.

1 MINUTE OF VIDEO = 1.8 MILLION WORDS

WHO IS THIS BOOK FOR?

This e-book is designed primarily for marketing managers tasked with producing an internal or external video either independently, or with the collaboration of a video production company. So whether you're the CMO or the new intern, this e-book will help you and your team confidently build your most powerful communication tools - your visual assets. Here's what we cover:

○ Establishing goals

○ Creating a treatment

○ The production process

○ Keeping within budget

○ How to work with a creative partner

LEVERAGING YOUR ASSETS

Last year, a whopping 87% of U.S. companies reported an increased marketing focus emphasizing a social media strategy and tactics with reflective budgets.

No wonder Adobe Social Intellegence predicts communication across most social platforms will be predominately video by 2018.

Starting best practices in multi- purposing assets across platforms in visual campaigns puts you miles ahead!

67%

Brands running visual campaigns (video, animation or motion graphics) on social media get 67% more qualified leads per month than those who don't.

86%

Companies with strong visual campaigns on social media have 86% higher click-through rates for their websites.

73%

Strong visuals stand out with a 73% higher impression rate on social media.

THE PRODUCTION PROCESS

START!

Pre-production
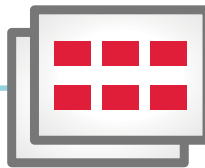
Treatment	Script	Storyboard	Schedule

Production
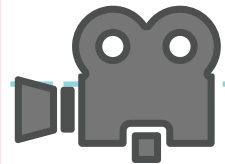
Production

Post Production
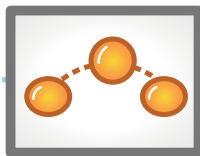
Editorial	Graphics	Color	Finish

Delivery!

CHAPTER TWO

PRE-PRODUCTION

TREATMENT

A treatment is a document that summarizes a video's concept and goals, as well as the creative direction that will be taken, including mood and tone. It also works to ensure everyone associated with the project shares the same vision, helping to minimize misunderstandings down the road. There are multiple variations of a treatment. Overall, the following are the main points it should include:

- Goals
- Audience
- Approach
- Outline
- Budget
- Timeline

SETTING GOALS

Too often we've encountered well-meaning clients who "want a video" for their website, but don't know what it should be about. Identifying a need or goal up front is one of the most critical steps in pre-production. We find most video content does one of three things: **educates**, **inspires**, or **entertains**. Sometimes a video will do all three, ultimately motivating the viewer to take a desired action.

Ideally, you should be able to summarize the goal of your video in one or two sentences, max. If it takes more than one or two sentences to sum it up, it's too broad, and therefore is likely to be less effective.

SAMPLE GOALS

Educate consumers on the wide range of benefits as well as goods and services available to co-op members.

Inspire middle-school aged girls to consider a career in engineering.

Convey the quality of our product and demonstrate its superiority over the competition by highlighting its features and benefits.

Notice in each case the intention is to encourage the audience to think or behave differently.
What is the desired outcome you'd like to create?

TARGET AUDIENCE

Who is this video for? What is your audience's age, experience level, and educational background? Are they new to your company or senior level strategists? While it's not uncommon to have a primary and secondary audience, don't try to be everything to everybody as it generally weakens your primary message.
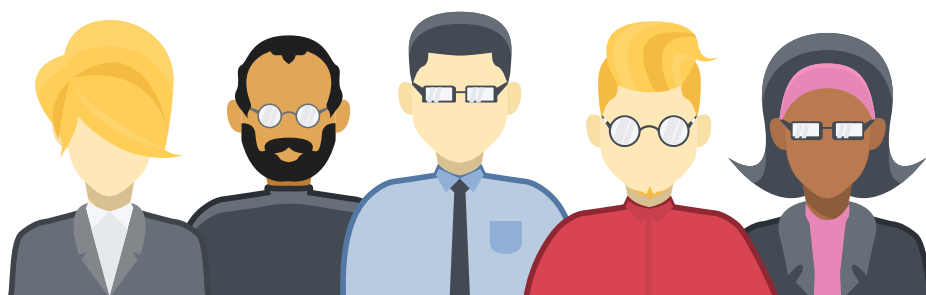
APPROACH

Once you've determined who your audience is, you can begin to explore how you want your video to look, sound and feel. Do you want to include interviews with key personnel combined with b-roll (b-roll is used to describe supplemental footage to help tell a story). Perhaps documentary-style is the best choice. Have you considered graphics?

Setting a mood is also critical. Is the tone happy, serious or emotional? How do you want your audience to feel at the close of the video?

Creative details to be considered at this stage:

shooting style

editing approach

graphics

music

Pro Tips: There are many reasons to include the graphic artist in pre-production and production. You can decide if the graphics artist should be on set to help make decisions that will impact his/ her timeline and budget in post. The motion graphics artist can speak to the editor to develop a workflow for passing assets back and forth to each other. They can make sure things like tracking markers for screen replacements get placed correctly or if they're even needed at all (saving time by not having to paint them out). They also can make sure the cinematographer is framing the picture with the graphics in mind.

BUDGET

The most common question we hear as a production company is, "What does it cost to produce a video?" Yikes! That's like asking a builder how much it costs to build a house! What's the square footage? Do you have your heart set on an ocean view? Are you planning on carpeting the living room or do you want to install some exotic hardwood? Video budgets can be equally complex. A high-end video will require more crew, equipment, and time to produce than a low-end video. Other factors that affect the budget, include:

- Length
- Filming location(s) and permits
- Number of shoot days
- Scriptwriter
- On-camera talent/VO talent
- Food for crew

- Text graphics
- Animation
- Equipment rental
- Set/Studio rental
- Music/ stock footage licensing
- Hair/Makeup/Wardrobe

OUTLINE

Decide what topics need to be covered in the video and list the ideas and main points that you wish to convey, as well as the logical order in which they should be conveyed.

SCRIPT

Using the information you've collected above, it's now time to move into scripting. This can be done internally or it may be a service that the production company provides.

If you are using a professional voiceover, or on-camera talent, expect that your script will be read as written. If you're incorporating interviews with company personnel or clients, include the questions you intend to ask, along with bullet-pointed responses you want to obtain. During production, you will ideally ask those questions along with follow-up and segue questions to get a variety of "soundbites" you can then string together in the edit.

Scripts are typically written in a two column format, with the audio (what's being said) in the right column and the video (what's being seen) in the left column.
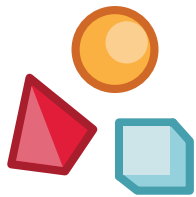
THINK VISUALLY

What symbols and imagery are important to your brand? To your message? Start thinking of this now.

CONSIDER THE LENGTH

180 words per minute is the average rule for voice-overs. It's important to include a little breathing room in there as well. Keep this in mind as you're writing.

TARGET YOUR AUDIENCE

Who are they? What kind of content do they enjoy? What do you need them to do in order to consider this video a success? Answer these questions.
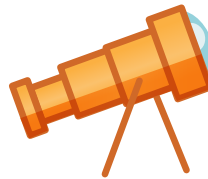
EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES

Quick searches on Vimeo, Dribble, and Behance will give you tons of inspiration for your piece. Be sure to bookmark your favorites!

SCRIPT SAMPLE

Visuals	Voiceover/Audio
MS of Jane against a white background (she transitions into frame - stands smiling)	Meet Jane
Co-Op town transitions in around her, crash zoom out to establishing shot of Co-Op Town. The building titles appear one by one as they are called.	Jane owns an electric utility, a credit union, a convenience store, an insurance company AND SOON... a grocery store!
Motion comes to a "screeching" halt.	Wait a minute!
Ostentatious items transition into the frame and on to Jane. (Diamond ring, Rolls Royce, designer handbag, keys to a private jet)	Is Jane a billionaire?
All "billionaire" items drop off the frame. Jane holds up a "co-op member" card.	Nope. She's just your average Jane. And co-op member.
Cut to motion graphics on white bg - what is a Co-op?	So what exactly is a co-op?
Cut back to Co-op Town - Establish Jane with fellow townspeople in front of the "going out of business" grocery store. Cut to MCU of Jane looking concerned, then she has an idea.	Co-ops start with people who join together to meet a need, not to make money.
Cut to WS - tracking a co-op cab that reads "Co-ops are Worker-Owned" - the cab stops in the front of the grocery store and Jane hops in. The other townsfolk wave as the cab departs.	People who use or deliver the co-op's services are its members.
Transition to Credit Union with cab still framed in shot - the cab stops. Cut to MCU of the door with a sign that says "Financial Advice FREE" as Jane enters. Cut to MS of Jane shaking hands with the Financial Advisor, both standing. Cut to MS of Jane leaving, pausing by the door which has a sign that says "Run for Credit Union Board" before smiling, nodding, and exiting.	Since members own and democratically control the co-op, their knowledge and how they get involved are key to its success.

WS= Wide shot, MS= Mid shot, MCU= Mid Close

For a downloadable script template see Appendix.

STORYBOARDING

Once a concept or script is written, the next step is to create a storyboard. A storyboard is a sequence of simple drawings that represent, shot-by-shot, what the final video will look like. Each shot is accompanied by notes about what is going on in the scene, as well as what is being said on camera or in voiceover. You can also make notes about camera angles and movement, transitions between shots and other details.

MAJOR MOMENTS
Start with the major scenes first. Secondary scenes and transitions will come naturally if you are working off of a strong base.

EXPERIMENT!
This is the most flexible part of the animation process. Try out new ideas and see what best delivers your message. Be fearless!

PRESENT IN PERSON
Storyboards are usually paired with descriptions. However, this is no substitute for presenting boards in person. Presentations leave little room for misinterpretation and help everyone feel involved in the creative process.

CLARITY IS KEY
Crazy drawing talent isn't a requirement, but clarity in your drawings is. A lot can be understood from a few well placed lines and arrows.

Pro Tips: If your creative department doesn't have an artist on staff, this is a good time to reach out to a visual creative company. Typically, visual creative companies have an artist on staff who can create the storyboard. While you may be tempted to skip this step, a storyboard is the best way to communicate your vision to your team, the production crew, and the editor.

Things you may want to include:

What is the setting or background for the scene?
Is there a character on screen? If so, what action is the character performing?
What props are in the scene?
Will any text appear on screen? What is the size, color, and position of the text?

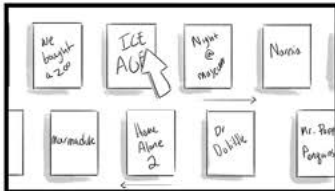# STORYBOARD SAMPLE

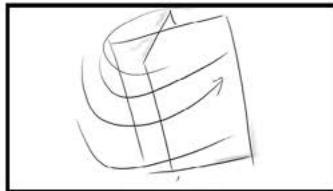Now. When your parents buy

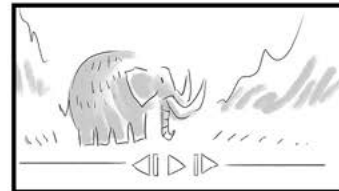two specially marked boxes

of big G cereal,

you can start a digital collection

with one of ten

awesome movies.

Yours to keep

and watch anytime.

Anywhere.

With anyone.

See the back of the box for more details.

For a downloadable storyboard template see Appendix

TIME TO BRING IN THE PROS?

If you're thinking about working with a production company, budget is usually one of the first questions asked. While commercial production isn't cheap, it doesn't need to scare you away, either. The entry point for basic commercial grade video is around $7,500. Remember, visual assets drive revenue—while it doesn't need all the bells and whistles of Hollywood films, it does need to represent your brand well.

This is a good time to point out that a reputable production company can also help you determine how to make the most of your budget. For example, say you're shooting a brand video for your website. Your production company might have recommendations on how, with some minor modifications in editing, you can also use "bite-size" pieces of it for various social media platforms or to send as a link in a traditional direct mail piece, or for the sales force to use in presentations. It's always best to determine how your video assets will be used currently and down the road before you start shooting.

FROM IN-HOUSE TO OUT-OF-HOUSE

You've got the green light from the powers that be to proceed with video. That's exciting! But are you rethinking trying to tackle this in-house? Don't worry. We get that all the time. And don't think all the work you have done so far is in vain. It's gotten you and your team really clear about the goal, the look and budget. Finding a strong visual creative partner can make you look like a hero (at least in the eyes of your boss.) Not to mention, get you some amazing visual assets.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF COMPANIES

Given the rise in popularity of video (and all the social platforms where it can be utilized) there is no shortage of creative partners out there that promise everything from a-to-z and beyond. Spending time up front to find the right partner might be the best investment you make.

TIPS ON SELECTING A VIDEO PRODUCTION COMPANY

DON'T

- [ ] let the guy in accounting convince you that his nephew can do it.

- [ ] shoot it on your iphone.

- [ ] hire a wedding photographer.

- [ ] assume a larger company is better than a small company.

- [ ] go for the lowest quote, until you've compared "apples" to "apples."

DO

- [ ] ask for referrals for production companies from colleagues or other work associates.

- [ ] thoroughly review the production company's website. Does it support their claim that they are experts in their field? Do their core values jive with that of your organization?

- [ ] review a potential company's activity on social media. (How recent is their last blog or "recent news"? How often do they Tweet? Update their Facebook page? Non-activity doesn't mean they won't do a good video, but it is a warning flag that they may not be current within their industry.

- [ ] find out if they offer all the services you require, i.e., editing, scriptwriting, animation, etc...

- [ ] inquire as to whether they have any references or testimonials available.

DECIDING ON A CREATIVE PARTNER

Once you've determined which creative partners might be a good fit for your project, reach out to them for further conversation and estimates. Be wary of any company that doesn't ask a lot of questions up front. There are many details that go into a video production and the only way to accurately estimate what it's going to cost is to understand the full scope of what's needed. If you can, we believe it's helpful to present your budget range up front. If you only have $15,000 to spend, why invite ideas in the $50K range? Also, to ensure a level playing field, be sure to give each production company the same information to consider. For example, if you intend to use staff in the video as opposed to paid actors, it will be important for everyone bidding to have that same information. Most companies should be able to provide you with an estimate within a few days. Don't be afraid to follow up with questions or clarifications on what certain line items mean.

Work samples and money aside, our best advice for finding a compatible partner is to make sure you feel comfortable working with the primary contact. Does he or she answer your questions quickly and thoroughly? Do you like the tone of their response? Do they ask you the right questions? Do they take the initiative in offering suggestions based on their expertise? You're looking for a proactive contact with the know-how and willingness to usher the project from beginning to end so you don't have to "babysit" every stage of the production.

TIMEFRAME + DEADLINES

Whether or not you decide to work with an out-of-house production company, you'll still need to take an active role in the decision-making process. Developing a production schedule will likely fall to you. Typically, a standard 1—3 minute marketing video will take 6 to 8 weeks to complete, depending on the scope of the work. Be sure your team is fully on board with the schedule and available to give feedback and approval in a timely fashion to avoid delays.

ESTABLISH A CALENDAR

Work with your teammates (and production company, if applicable) to get a calendar in writing and approved. This helps set expectations for everyone on the team from the start. Be sure to include all major deadlines including when feedback from various parties is due.

GATHER APPROVAL TEAM

Who do you need approvals from? The earlier they are involved in this process the better. Trust us. Those late-to-the-game comments can lead to some serious overages.

USE A PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOL

Basecamp and Mavenlink are two examples of project management tools. Even a shared Google Doc can go a long way towards keeping your team organized. Try to avoid email chains since someone is bound to be left out. Consolidating all of the feedback into one place cuts down on contradictory comments and confusion.

SELECTING TALENT

Whether you're selecting talent to appear on camera or for a voice-over only, take some time to consider what qualities you're looking for before starting your search. What gender, age-range and ethnicity is best suited to deliver your message? Blond or brunette? Low, gravelly voice or light and feminine? Do you plan to show your video internally only, or will it end up on your company's website? How long do you intend to use the video? Six months? One year? If you're considering using employees, don't forget to ask the legal department if you need to use a "talent" contract with them. See section on "Forms."

If you're working with a creative partner, they may hold auditions with the help of a casting agent. You may choose to attend the auditions or not. Oftentimes, the production company will run the auditions and provide you with a reel of only the best auditions for your consideration. Occasionally, a second round of auditions or "callbacks" is required before finalizing the talent.

Pro Tips: *Talent agencies make money by charging the clients a percentage of the talent fees, typically 15%. So if your talent fee is $600, you will be charged $690. You should not have to pay any talent for auditioning (although if a production company or casting agent is running the audition, expect to pay them for their time, space, a camera, etc…). Sometimes it's also necessary to do a wardrobe fitting. The price for a fitting varies according to agency, but usually it's an hourly charge of $50—$75 per talent (plus 15%.) Wardrobe fittings take place after the talent has been selected; usually the week prior to production.*

SELECTING LOCATIONS

Whether you're shooting at your corporate headquarters, in a studio, or in someone's house, be sure to work with your videographer or video production company to select the best option. In addition to "the right look," you'll need to consider existing lighting (both indoor and sunlight), window placement, power sources, parking and staging area for the crew, and potential noise factors (i.e., a cement mixing factory next door.) Be sure to secure the proper written permissions, which often require a fee.

Pro Tips: *We also find it handy to keep a few 20 dollar bills in our pockets in the event we need to ask a homeowner to delay mowing his lawn. And those leaf blowers? An audio technician's nightmare!*

PRODUCTION SCHEDULE + CALL SHEET

Just prior to your shoot day, you will want to send out a production schedule and call sheet to everyone involved with the shoot. This should contain all relevant information about the shoot, e.g., the who , what, where, how and when.

CALL SHEET

Client info John Doe
Date Nov 12, 1955
Shoot day 1 of 3

Production Company Info: CRASH+SUES
Producer: Jane Doe

CAFT SERVICES AVAILABLE:	Weather:	Sunny
CREW CALL TIME:	Sunrise:	7:35 a.m.
	Sunset:	9:15 p.m.
LUNCH SERVED:	Temp High:	88F
	Temp Low:	72F
EMERGENCY #:	Hospital:	

LOCATION: Hill Valley High School

DIRECTIONS: TWO BLOCKS OFF MAIN STREET

PARKING: IN BACK OF SCHOOL

For a downloadable call sheet see Appendix

RELEASES

A signed video release is like car insurance... you don't need it until you need it! Therefore, it's good practice to make a habit out of collecting releases from anyone identifiable on camera to prevent potential (albeit unlikely) lawsuits later. Also, if there's any chance your video will be submitted to a contest, distributor, or TV show, you'll need to provide signed releases. Yes, it can be done after the fact, but trust us...the last thing you want to do is start chasing down signatures from people you haven't seen in months. A release should include:

◯ Specifics on what is being released (video, photographs, etc...)

◯ Terms of useage, including where, when, and how long the video may be used. (Aim for as broad as possible. Legal experts often use "in perpetuity" meaning, forever).

◯ Terms of payment (if any.)

◯ Clause allowing the videographer or production company the right to sell the video to a third party.

◯ A signature and date by the individual releasing his/her images. If the subject is a minor (under 18 years old), the release should be signed by a parent or legal guardian.

TYPES OF RELEASES
THERE ARE FOUR PRIMARY TYPES OF RELEASES USED IN VIDEO PRODUCTION

GENERAL RELEASE
This type of release is for **non-actors** who appear on camera. For example, an employee appearing in a company video, or a homeowner featured on a home makeover show. Children falling into this category under the age of 18 need to have their parents sign the release.

GENERAL RELEASE

Program Title: BTTF
Date: Nov 12, 1955
Location: Hill Valley
Participant: John Doe

In consideration for my appearance in the above Program, I hereby authorize [production co.] its parents, subsidiaries, affiliates, successors, assigns licensees, employees and agents of the [production co.] to record, reproduce, photography and/or use my name, likeness, image, voice and performance on film, tape or otherwise for use in the Program, or any parts thereof. I agree that the Program may be edited as desired and distributed, exhibited, exploited, promoted and used in whole or in part in any form, format, manner of media, either now or hereafter created worldwide in perpetuity. I understand that I have no rights to the Program or any benefits derived therefrom. I consent to the use of my name, likeness, image, voice and biographical materials about me in connection with this Program's promotion and promotion of [the production co.].

I represent and warrant that I have the right to enter into this agreement and that my performance and the rights I have granted in the Agreement will not conflict with or violate any commitment or understanding I have with any other person or entity, nor be defamatory or infringe upon any rights (including without limitation privacy rights) of any person or entity. If I am signing for as an agent or employee of a firm or corporation, I warrant that I am fully authorized to do so. I agree that this release shall be binding upon my heirs, legal representatives, successors and assigns.

I agree to indemnify and hold harmless [production co.] from and against all claims, losses, expenses and liabilities of every kind including reasonable attorney's fees, arising out of the inaccuracy or breach of any representation, warranty and undertaking I have made in this Agreement. I expressly release and agree to hold harmless [production co.] from any and all claims arising out of the use of the Program.

I understand that nothing herein requires [production co.] to use my appearance in or in connection with the program. This Agreement represents the entire understanding of the parties and may not be amended unless mutually agreed by the parties in writing.

Signature:_____Date:_____
Print Name:_____
Organization Name:_____
Phone:_____
If under 18 years of age, signature of parent of guardian:_____

For downloadable release forms see Appendix

TALENT RELEASE
This type of release is for **professional actors and actresses**, whether or not they are paid.

TALENT RELEASE

Program Title: BTTF_____

Date: Nov 12, 1955_____

Location: Hill Valley_____

Participant: John Doe_____

By signing this deal memo, I authorize, and release and transfer to [the production co.] and its respective, directors, officers, agents, contractors, employees, authorized representatives, transferees, or assigns the following video/audio/print rights:

TERMS:

COMPENSATION: Producer employs Player for **On Camera talent/VO talent** for a flat rate of $_____. Payment will be made after receipt of invoice from Player or authorized Agency representing talent. There will be no additional compensation for supplemental use of material.

WARDROBE: To be furnished by production company (*or provided by talent*)

I have read and understand all the terms of this memo and am competent to sign it:

Signature:_____Date:_____

Print Name:_____

Organization Name:_____

Phone:_____

If under 18 years of age, signature of parent of guardian:_____

For downloadable release forms see Appendix

CRASH+SUES   SHARE THESE TIPS

MATERIALS RELEASE

The materials release is for permission to use photographs, video, film or other media which may be copyrighted or owned by others. For example, say you're shooting a brand video and the CEO wants to include a photograph of his granddad who started the company back in 1940. A verbal agreement is not enough—get a signed release!

MATERIALS RELEASE

Description of Photograph, Video Footage or Materials (collectively, the "Material"):

_____
_____
_____

Name(s) of Individuals appearing or heard in Materials:

_____
_____

For good and valuable consideration, Licensor hereby grants to: [the production co.] its parents, subsidiaries, successors, assigns and licensees ("Company") the non-exclusive right to photograph, record, reproduce, edit, distribute and otherwise use as desired the Material including without limitation any images, voices and likenesses of people, trademarks, servicemarks, logos, copyrighted material and/or other materials which appear on film, tape or otherwise (the "Recoding") and to incorporate the Recording into the Program and in all materials relating thereto. Licensor agrees that [the production co.] shall own all rights, title, and interest, including copyright, in and to the Recording and the Program, and shall have the perpetual right to use, distribute, exhibit, promote and otherwise exploit the Program throughout the world in any form, format, manner or media whatsoever, whether now known or hereafter created without limitation or restriction. Licensor also consents to the use of the Materials in any advertising and marketing material used to promote the Program or [the production co.].

Licensor represents and warrants that it has the right to enter into this Agreement, that it has secured all rights necessary for [the production co.] to use the Material as specified above (including without limitation the rights of any person appearing in the Material) and that the rights it has granted in the Agreement will not conflict with or violate any commitment or understanding it has with any other person or entity, nor be defamatory or infringe upon any rights (including without limitation privacy rights) of any person or entity. If the individual signing this Agreement is an agent or employee of Licensor, s/he warrants that s/he is fully authorized to do so. Licensor agrees that this release shall be binding upon its heirs, legal representatives, successors and assigns.

Licensor agrees to indemnify and hold harmless [the production co.] from and against all claims, losses, expenses and liabilities of every kind including reasonable attorney's fees, arising out of the inaccuracy or breach of any representation, warranty or undertaking Licensor has made in this Agreement. Licensor expressly releases and agrees to hold harmless [the production co.] from any and all claims arising out of the use of the Material in the Program.

For downloadable release forms see Appendix

LOCATION RELEASE
This release allows you to videotape at a location you do not own.

LOCATION RELEASE

Agreement entered into this __3__ day of _____ Nov 12 , 1955 __ by and between [production co.]
(herein referred to as "Production Company") and
_____John Doe_____(herein referred to as "Grantor").

1. Identity of Filming Location: Grantor hereby agrees to permit Production Company to use the property
(_____) located at
_____ (herein referred to as
"Property") in connection with the motion picture tentatively titled,
"_____" (herein referred to as"Picture") for rehearsing, photographing,
videotaping, filming, and recording scenes and sounds for the Picture. Production Company and its
licensees, sponsors, assigns and successors may exhibit, advertise and promote the Picture or any portion
thereof, whether or not such uses contain audio and/or visual reproductions of the Property and whether or
not the Property is identified, in any and all media in which currently exist or which may exist in the future in
all countries of the world and in perpetuity.

2. Right of Access: Production Company shall have the right to bring personnel and equipment (including
props and temporary sets) onto the Property and to remove same after completion of its use of the
Property hereunder. Production Company agrees not to photograph, film, videotape and use in the Picture
the actual name, if any, connected with the Property or to use any other name directly associated with the
Property. If Production Company depicts the interior(s) of any structures located on the Property, Grantor
agrees that Production Company shall not be required to depict such interior(s) in any particular manner in
the picture.

3. Time of Access: The permission granted hereunder shall be for the period commencing on or about
_____AM/PM on _____ and continuing until _____AM/PM. If the
weather or other conditions are not favorable for such purpose on such date(s), the date(s) shall be
postponed to a date to be determined by mutual agreement between Grantor and Production Company.
This within permission shall also apply to future retakes and/or added scenes.

4. Payment: For each day the Production Company uses the location, it shall pay Grantor the sum of
$_____ in consideration for the foregoing which represents costs of personnel only.
Grantor agrees to waive any and all location fees associated with granting the right to film, videotape and
record on or about the Property.

5. Alterations to Location: Production Company agrees that if it becomes necessary to change, alter or
rearrange any equipment on the Property that belongs to Grantor, Production Company shall return and
restore said equipment to its original place and condition, or repair it, if necessary. Production Company
agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Grantor from and against any and all liabilities, damages and claims

For downloadable release forms see Appendix

WHEN YOU DON'T NEED A RELEASE

○   If the purpose is for a news, public affairs, or sports broadcast.

○   If the person is unrecognizable, i.e., back of the head, hands, too distant in the shot to be distinguishable, etc...

○   If the video is taken in a public place, i.e., on the street, a beach, a park. (Be aware however, just because you don't need a release does not mean you don't need a permit!)

○   For large scale public events, like a parade. (To avoid sideways glances or a confrontation by a potential "protester," you might want to consider posting signs stating that the event is being videotaped.)

SHELF LIFE

It's pretty easy to sniff out a video that's past its freshness date. Perhaps the opening shot features a logo or tagline that's no longer in use. Or maybe there's a Macintosh Classic lurking in the background (we've actually seen this.) Early in the pre-production process, you need to determine how long you intend to use your video. If there's any chance your company's branding material will change, consider shooting those elements independently (to allow for an edit, later) or not shooting them at all. Also, consider whether it matters to you if employees that no longer work for you appear in the video. Depending on your industry, you may just have to accept that anything older than 2-3 years is going to look dated, and the only way to stay current is to produce a new video.

DISTRIBUTION

Everybody wants a video for their website.But how do you get people to your site? SEO for one thing, and social media. Blogs, tweets, LinkedIn posts, Facebook etc... utilize every platform you can to reference your video and be sure to include a link. And don't be shy about encouraging viewers to "share" or retweet the video.

CHAPTER THREE

PRODUCTION

PRODUCTION

You made it through pre-production! Now it's on to the next step in making all that hard work go from paper to film (so to speak), and that next step is production. This is where you take all your "ingredients" from pre-production— the script, talent, crew, location, equipment, and so on—and blend them together to capture your concept visually. Now, just like any given project is going to have a different look and feel, so too will your production, depending on budget and time. So you walk onto the set, grab a cup of coffee, and look around. What can you generally expect to see? Well, to put it simply, an organized frenzy of people arranging and rearranging the talent, props, audio, camera equipment, and lighting on set to capture each scene.

CAMERAS

When it comes to video, visuals are half the battle and an essential weapon to yield is the camera. Poor visual quality can hinder your audience's experience, so you want to make sure that you're creating something pleasing for them to look at. Of course, you would like to have your video looking like it came straight out of Hollywood, but that's difficult to achieve when the infamous budget creeps in. What you should do is take a critical look at your needs and select a camera with features that meet those needs. Does your video need to be filmed in 4K, or at 1,200 frames per second, or will it be shot in extreme lighting situations? If not, then you don't need a camera that has those bells and whistles.

To help get you started, here is a list of common cameras and some notable features:

Digital Cine Cameras:
(Whether purchasing or renting, these cameras are typically priced higher than DSLRs.)
Arri Alexa: Cinematic quality images with high dynamic range for optimal color correction
Sony FS7: Super 35mm CMOS sensor with 4K internal recording and 180fps
Canon C300 Mark II: Super 35mm CMOS sensor with 4K internal recording and large ISO range for low light situations

DSLRs:
(These cameras shoot stills and video and are generally less expensive to purchase or rent than cine cameras, while still providing a professional look.)
Canon 5D Mark III: 22.3MP full-frame CMOS sensor
Sony a7S II: 4K internal recording and excellent for filming in low lighting
Panasonic Gh4: 4K internal recording and 60p at full HD

LENSES

When pursuing a pleasing visual aesthetic, a vital aspect to consider is which lens to use. You may find yourself having to film with an average camera, but coupling that with a good lens can boost your overall image quality by quite a bit. Be sure not to overlook the importance of your lenses during the process of budgeting, since they are well worth the investment.

When selecting lenses, know that the brand of lens is not critical. Some may argue this point, but for the sake of not getting lost in opinions, we'll keep moving on. Some common brands for lenses range from (but certainly are not limited to) Canon, Nikon, Sigma, Sony, and Zeiss. What is more important to consider in choosing a lens is what your video's needs are compositionally. Do you have wide, establishing shots? Do you need to see the tiny details of a particular object? Are you conducting a traditional interview? All these scenarios call for different lenses that cater to a specific purpose. It's quite common to use more than one lense on any given project.

Here are a handful of lens types and their function:

TELEPHOTO: These lenses have varying focal lengths, allowing them to zoom into objects from a distance.

PRIME: These lenses have fixed focal lengths. Excellent for interview scenarios as well as low light situations (depending on the aperture range of the lens).

MACRO: These lenses have the ability to capture minute details of an object.

WIDE-ANGLE: With focal lengths of 35mm and under, these lenses are commonly used for filming scenes or objects in a wide composition, such as landscapes or a large group of people.

LIGHTING

One critical aspect of production is lighting. It's something that can elevate the look of a video from amateur to professional quality. While lighting needs will vary depending on subject matter and resources, three-point lighting is a standard method of lighting used in film and video (as well as still photography) to illuminate a subject while controlling the shading and shadows that naturally occur with direct lighting only.

Consisting of a key light, a back light, and a fill light, this simple lighting plan adds a lot of depth to the subject's face and separates them from the background. It is highly flexible in regards to how dramatic you want to make the subject look.

BACK LIGHT

FILL LIGHT

KEY LIGHT

CAMERA
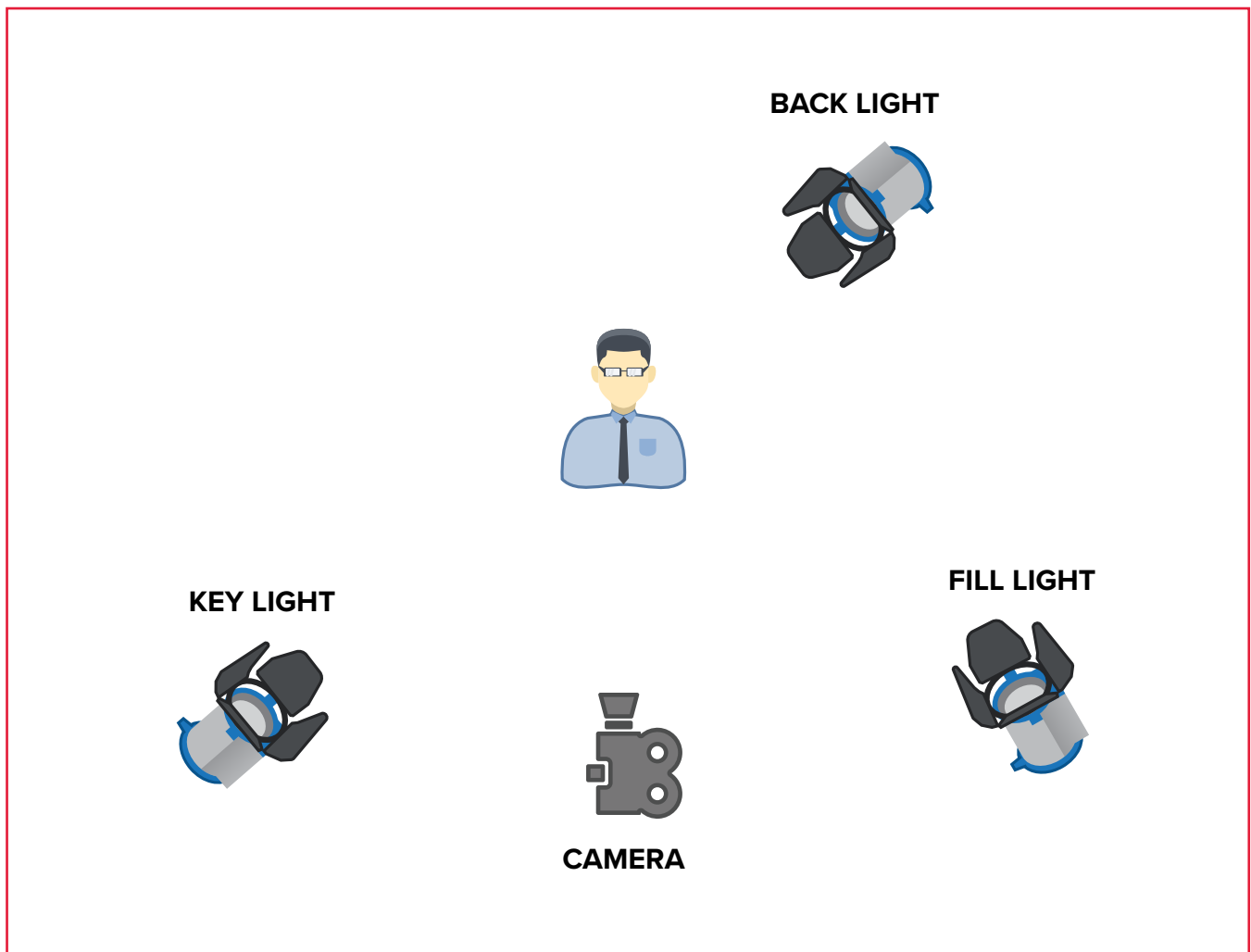
FIELD AUDIO

If you want your video to truly be top-notch, having quality audio is a must. The last thing you want is for your audience to be distracted by poor audio and thus disengaged from the message you're trying to get across in your video.

Regardless of the scope of your production, you will most likely find yourself using an external audio recorder (to capture the audio separately from the camera itself), audio cables, and a boom pole (used by the boom operator to maneuver a microphone to a desired position). Similar to cameras and lenses, the type of microphone you need will be determined based on your needs.

Here are a few common production scenarios and suggested microphones to use:

INTERVIEWS: A lavalier mic attached to the subject's clothing or a shotgun mic positioned above them using a boom pole.

IN THE FIELD: A shotgun mic either attached to the camera or operated by an audio technician.

VOICE-OVERS: A cardioid condenser mic.

LOG SHEET

A valuable resource to have on set when you're filming is a document called a "log sheet." The sheet is used to note key information about each shot that is recorded for reference during the edit process. Typically, the information includes: action, scene number, composition (wide shot, close up, etc...) and sound source. Good "takes" are also starred. The more information you can provide the editor regarding the footage the happier the editor will be and the smoother the editing process will go.

Log sheets vary in their layout depending on the production company, but here is an example of a log sheet we use.

LOG SHEET

SCENE #	SHOT #	INT/EXT	LOCATION	SHOT TYPE	SOUND	SHOT DESCRIPTION	NOTES	QUALITY	X
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
11									
12									
13									
14									

ETIQUETTE ON THE SET

Something that is often overlooked on set is etiquette, especially for people new to the industry. Some (seemingly common sense) things to consider on location are:

Unless you have an integral role on set, be a fly on the wall, not a stumbling block. Observing from a distance is greatly appreciated, rather than being in the thick of it, potentially hindering the crew's groove.

When the director or AC calls, "Quiet on the set!" then silence from everyone on set is expected. The microphones being used can pick up a surprising amount of background noise so even the tiniest whisper or quiet cellphone buzz is frowned upon.

There's nothing worse than rolling on a perfectly good "take" and afterwards, noticing a half-empty water bottle lurking in the background. Always pick up after yourself.

CHAPTER FOUR

POST PRODUCTION

CREATIVE EDIT

So you have a bunch of footage and now you have to create a masterpiece out of it. In a nutshell, the creative editor's job is to tell the story by combining all the elements including footage, audio and graphics. Editors generally work off a script or storyboard, and can have a little or a lot of influence on the final product, depending on the client's input.

ASSETS PREP

Prepping for edit will help with a smoother assembly of the edit. Provide the editor with any elements needed up front, including a storyboard, script and log sheet. Depending on the type of camera the footage was shot on, and the editing programs being used, the files may or may not need to be transcoded prior to edit. Some editing programs can take raw camera files and others will need to be converted into useable files to be able to play in the program. Organizing scenes, shots, and audio in your project is helpful in finding specific takes.

ASSET CHECKLIST

Below is a checklist to help you organize the things you'll need to make sure your project runs smoothly. Make sure to have all of the necessary assets before moving on to post production!

◯ Pre-Production
  ☐ Script
  ☐ Storyboard

◯ Production Assets
  ☐ Camera Footage
  ☐ Audio Files (voice-over, recorded sound, etc...)
  ☐ Graphics Files (Illustrator, Photoshop, TIFF, PNG)
  ☐ Music
  ☐ Log Sheet

FIRST ROUGH CUT

Your first rough edit should match the provided elements (storyboard and/or script), because time and money have been spent to create a story and "look" that the client has approved in advance. This is what they are expecting. During production, there may be changes to the script scenes made on-the-fly that may affect the initial cut. Ideally, the client was informed of the changes first, and notes taken on set will alert you to the change.

Script

Log sheet

Storyboards
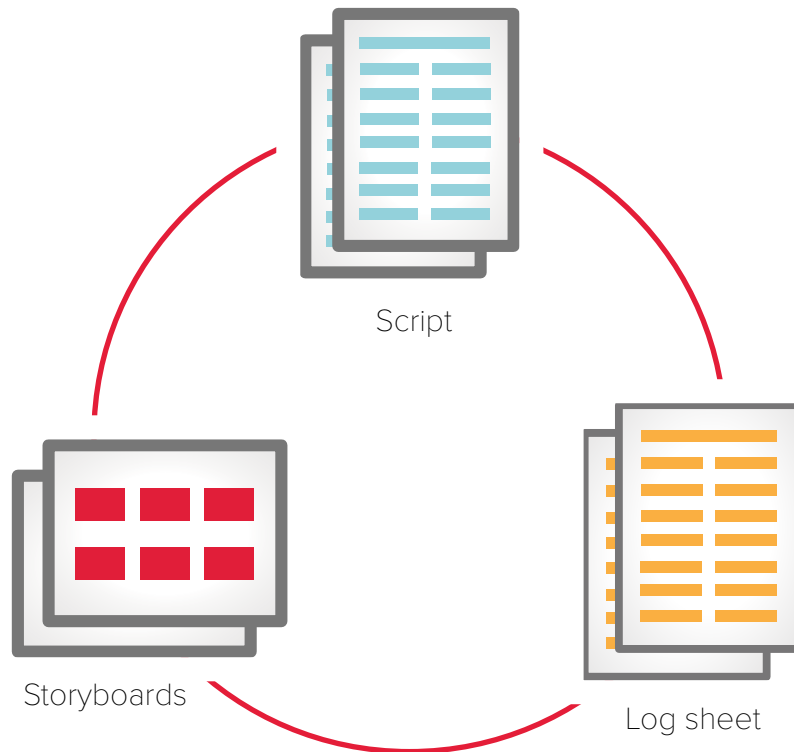
SUBSEQUENT ROUGH CUTS

Once the first rough cut has been seen by the client, the editor will use their feedback to adjust it to their liking. Written notes are the norm, but sometimes conversations take place as well. The editor may end up doing multiple re-edits and adjustments before getting an approved cut.

PICTURE LOCK!
WHAT NOW?

Picture lock is exactly what it sounds like. The timings and footage that you spent so much time massaging during the creative edit phase are now locked. Forever. If you want to make a change to the edit after this point, we make you do 1000 pushups then run a marathon.

While that isn't entirely true (we don't make you run the marathon), picture lock is serious business so make sure the piece is exactly what you want. If any approvals are required (execs higher up the food chain, etc…) be sure to get them now. Changes after this point can be accomplished, but they take up more time, effort and budget. Here are some indicators that picture is locked and it is time to move on to color, audio, graphics, and finish:

◯ Video length is approved   ◯ Rough timing of graphics is approved

◯ Shot selections are approved   ◯ Audio is ready for mixing

◯ Shot lengths are approved

GRAPHICS

Most projects will incorporate at least some basic level of graphics. Examples include logos, names of speakers, and transitions. More advanced styles of graphics include green screen, compositing, paint effects, title sequences, and full blown animations. For more information on animation check out our ebook "The Ultimate Guide to Your Next Animation Project". (Link)

GRAPHICS IN EDIT

Ideally, the motion graphics artist has already been brought into the project during pre-production and a "look" has been established using "style frames." Depending on the extent of the graphics, the artist may post additional work-in-progress elements for approval, or they may not. Once the client signs off on the final look and timing, the graphics artist will render everything out to be incorporated into the final edit.

It's important for the motion graphics to be represented during the creative edit process, but because they are so time intensive to create, your graphics may be represented by still images until further along in the edit process. This allows the editor to manipulate their timings and placement easily.

Because the process seems to shift slightly with every project, consult your editor and motion graphics artist for a specific workflow relevant to your project.

MOTION GRAPHICS IN A VIDEO

Here are some common uses for motion graphics in video.

TEXT

This is probably the most common use of motion graphics in editing. This includes everything from lower third name ID's, to supers (text that appears on screen) to graphic images that help progress the story.

LOGO ANIMATIONS

Give your logo a little personality with this common use of motion graphics. Here's some inspiration that we really love. (link)

TITLE SEQUENCES

Title sequences in film or video are a great way to set the flavor and tone for the story to come. In fact, one of the industry's pioneering artists, Saul Bass, was known for them. Take a peek at his work (link), You'll surely recognize some of it.

Pro Tips: *Often times, the term 'motion graphics' is used as a catch-all that dips into the realm of both animation and visual effects. The reality is, each is its own separate category under the graphics umbrella. Animation is generally more expensive and takes longer to produce a final product. If you want to learn more about this style of graphics, we have a great ebook on animation.* (Link)

VFX (VISUAL EFFECTS) IN A VIDEO

Visual Effects is the WOW in superhero films. It is the combining of multiple video assets intended to create a seamless shot or scene. This is also where you **may** be able to fix some mistakes from production. However, never assume, as the saying goes, that you can "fix it in post."

GREEN/BLUE SCREEN

A common technique that allows you to composite one shot over another. (Think about your weather man on the 10PM news.)
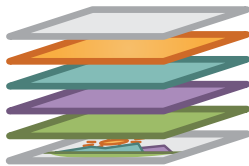
COMPOSITING

Compositing is the process of assembling multiple assets together to create a seamless shot.

SCREEN REPLACEMENTS

Do you have a cell phone or computer screen in your video? A common practice is to shoot the screens blank, then add the content in edit. This allows a lot of flexibility to put any image desired on the screen.

PAINTING OUT UNWANTED LOGOS

So you used an Apple computer during your shoot and you're now concerned about trademark infringement. Whoops! While it's easier to conceal it during production, don't worry, it's common for VFX artists to paint out logos.

WHAT IS COLOR CORRECTION VS COLOR GRADING?

The terms "color correction" and "color grading" are pretty synonymous with one another due to both being used to describe changing the overall look of an image. You can think of it like painting a picture—color correction is when you use broad brush strokes to set the foundation of the picture, whereas color grading is using fine-tuned brush strokes to add specific details to enhance the image. Both techniques are considered "painting" but there are differences between the two.

In general, color correction is when the footage is adjusted primarily through the "shadows", "midtones", and "highlights" in such a way as to fix any aberrations in the footage (i.e. incorrect color temperature, shifting of natural daylight during the shoot day, under or over-exposed subjects) as well as helping set the mood and drive the story by adding depth and life to the visuals.
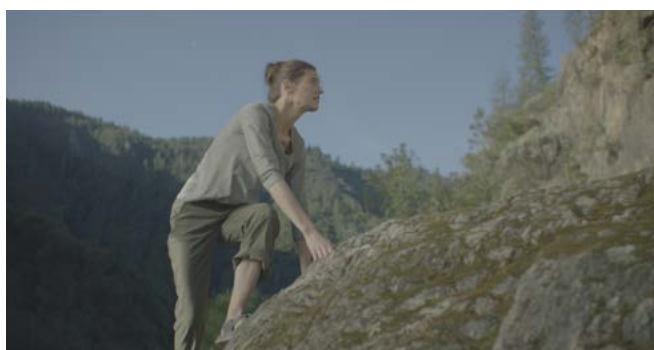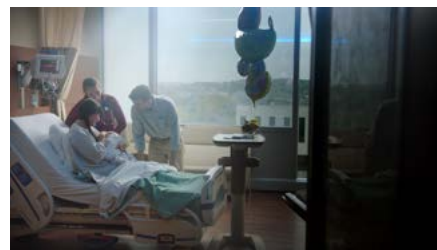

before

after

Color grading, to put it simply, is the more specific adjustment done to enhance the footage in order to achieve a desired look. Examples of this include (but are certainly not limited to):

Vignettes to draw the viewer's eyes to a specific place in the composition.
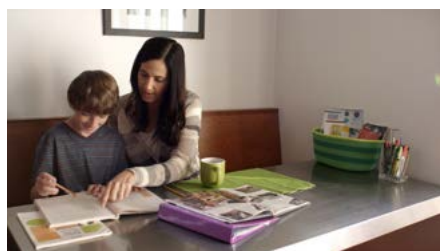

before

after

Changing the color of a certain object.

before

after

Brightening a precise area.

before

after

AUDIO
USING AN AUDIO HOUSE

An audio house is responsible for a variety of different tasks involving sound. They may be asked to search for music, alter existing music, or perhaps record original music. They also record voiceover talent, mix the final audio for legal standards, add sound effects (called sound design) and improve the overall quality of the audio.

EDIT ASSETS FOR AUDIO MIX:

A Quicktime file is used for the audio engineer as a reference to the locked picture. Usually an H.264 codec will do, but check with the audio house to see what works best for their systems. Most importantly, the video must have a slate with a "two-pop" that starts at :58sec with the video starting at 1 minute. This eliminates any guesswork for the finishing process.

OMF

An OMF (Open Media Framework) is the file that holds the original audio files from the edit. This is what is used to create the final mix. Most editing programs will export an OMF with the audio file embedded, but some may produce a folder with audio files and the audio engineer will need to re-link the files.

AUDIO
DOING AUDIO YOURSELF

When doing your own audio mix, you will not be required to export assets. Many editing programs have built-in audio tools or accompanying programs for audio mixing. This may or may not be a money-saver depending on the goal of the final audio mix.

FINISH

Finish is when you combine all the elements together to create the final video. This includes color-corrected media, the audio, and graphics. As mentioned previously, this is where logos are added, production fixes are (possibly) made, green screens are keyed and comped, and any other issues needing attention are addressed. The finish creates the final product.

STANDARDS FOR BROADCAST

○ Commercials are to broacast lenth :10, :15, :30, :60, or :120

○ Text/picture are within SD and HD title/action safe. Action safe: 10% in from edge of frame and title safe is 20% in. Center-cut safe: top and bottom safe is same as HD. Left and right action safe is 24% and title safe is 39%.

○ Text and picture are in HD and centercut safe guides

○ Audio levels are at broadcast safe

○ Color levels are broadcast safe

PROTOCOL FOR NON-BROADCAST

○ Know intended useage of video (Web, mobile, trade show, or meeting)

○ Length of video is not limited to commercial broadcast standards

○ Audio levels do not need to be at broadcast levels

○ Text is not constrained by broadcast safe guidelines

See Appendix for title/action safe diagram

CHAPTER FIVE

—— — —— DELIVERY —— — ——

WRAPPING EVERYTHING UP

Now that your video is finished, you need to get it wherever it needs to go. Website? YouTube? Embedded in a presentation? Also, where is the 'Master' (high quality version of the file) going to be stored? Does the delivery destination require closed captioning? Make sure your video is converted to a file format optimized for the device on which your audience is watching.

DELIVERABLES
COMMON FILE FORMATS

A Quicktime movie (.mov) isn't technically a codec—it's a container. A container (or wrapper) is like a bucket that you can drop a lot of things into, and it bundles it all together into one nice little package. Quicktime (.mov) is a pretty versatile container that can store lots of different codecs. It's possible to have an H264 .mov, a DNxHD .mov or a ProRes .mov.

MPEG4 is a very commonly used format on internet video sites like YouTube. These files are playable by almost all modern devices such as mobile phones, ipads, tablets, and laptop/desktop computers. An MPEG4 file can by played by Quicktime, Windows Media Player or VLC. There are many ways to optimize an MPEG4 file - it's not necessarily a one-file-fits-all. You may want different optimizations for viewing on a streaming mobile device, tablet, and desktop.

Windows Media Video is a format developed by Microsoft. It is very easy to play on PC's with Windows Media Player. The WMV format is most often used internally by large corporations (where the majority of the company is on PC's). WMV is not often used for internet distribution as it can be difficult to play this format on devices that are not Windows PC's.

DCP (Digital Cinema Package) is a special format used by movie theaters. It is very large in size (DCP's are often delivered via Hard Drive instead of sent over the internet). DCP's can also have additional security options to prevent piracy or playback at non-approved theaters.
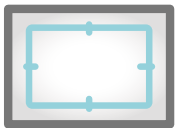
When sending a commercial out for broadcast television, there are specific requirements relating to size, framerate, audio levels, loudness, encoding and framing (title-safe and action-safe). If you plan to send your commercial to broadcast, you should be aware of these limitations early on as they can influence many parts of the production process.

GLOSSARY

PRODUCTION CREW

Depending on the scope of your project, you can expect to see some or all of the following crew members on set.

Assistant Director (AD) – assists the director in making sure his/her creative decisions are being executed effectively.

Best Boy(s) – assistant to the Key Grip or Gaffer.

Boom Operator – works with the sound technician in the placement of each microphone(s) on set.

Camera Operator – the one directly using the camera to record the scene. Often the DP fills this role in addition his/her own role.

Director – the one who calls the shots (literally and metaphorically) regarding overarching creative decisions and works with the talent to bring out their best performance(s).

Director of Photography (DP) – in charge of executing the director's vision visually, which includes lighting and the composition of each shot. Depending on the size of your budget, the Director and Director of Photography are sometimes combined into one role.

DIT (Digital Imaging Technician) - responsible for transferring and backing up the footage obtained during the shoot from the camera cards onto hard drives (assuming that digital cameras are being used).

First Assistant Camera (AC or focus puller) – makes sure the camera is in focus during filming. Assists in changing out lenses.

Gaffer – an electrician in charge of the lighting department. Works closely with the DP to achieve the look of each scene in regards to lighting.

Grip(s) – the person whose primary job is to load and unload or move equipment and cables. Usually works under the gaffer to build and strike lighting and camera setups.

Key Grip – the lead grip on the set.

PRODUCTION CREW

CONTINUED:

Make-Up Artist – makes sure the talent is looking their best.

Producer – responsible for all aspects of the production, from script development through edit. Also responsible for keeping the project on budget, hiring the crew and meeting deadlines.

Production Assistant (PA) – general assistant on set.

Set Dresser – in charge of the props on set and "dressing" each scene.

Sound Technician – records the dialogue and/or natural sounds for each scene.

PRODUCTION AND POST TERMS

Backlight – lights the subject(s) in the scene from behind.

Background Lights – highlights the background to add scope to the shot.

B-Roll – supplemental or alternative footage intercut with the main shot.

Color Correction – color correction is the process of enhancing the overall look of an image in regards to its color - whether it's film, digital, a motion picture, or photograph.

CU (close up) shot – a shot that tightly frames a person or an object.

Depth of Field – depth of field, also known as focus range, is any given distance between the farthest and nearest objects in an image that are in focus.

ECU (extreme close up) shot – a shot that is so tight that only a detail of the subject can be seen. An example is a shot of just the eye of a person.

Fill Light – fills in the shadows that are made by the key light.

Fine Cut – the fine cut no longer focuses on the entire video, but on the details of each and every cut. The fine cut emphasizes and strengthens the rhythms and structures identified in the first cut.

Green Screen – this is a colored backdrop on a shot usually green or blue, enabling background footage to be inserted, later.

Key Light – the main and brightest light, highlighting the subject(s) in the scene.

Medium Shot – camera angle shot from a medium distance.

Offline – offline is another term for creative edit.

Online – online is another term for finish edit.

Practical Lights – lights that are used as props to accent a scene (such as lamps).

Rough Cut – the first versions of a video after preliminary editing.

V.O. (voiceover) – a piece of narration in a movie or broadcast, not accompanied by an image of the speaker.

Wide Shot – a shot in which the human body or some other relevant object appears fully within the surrounding environment.

APPENDIX

DOWNLOADABLE FORMS:

SCRIPT TEMPLATE: Link

STORYBOARD TEMPLATE - HORIZONTAL: Link

STORYBOARD TEMPLATE - VERTICAL: Link

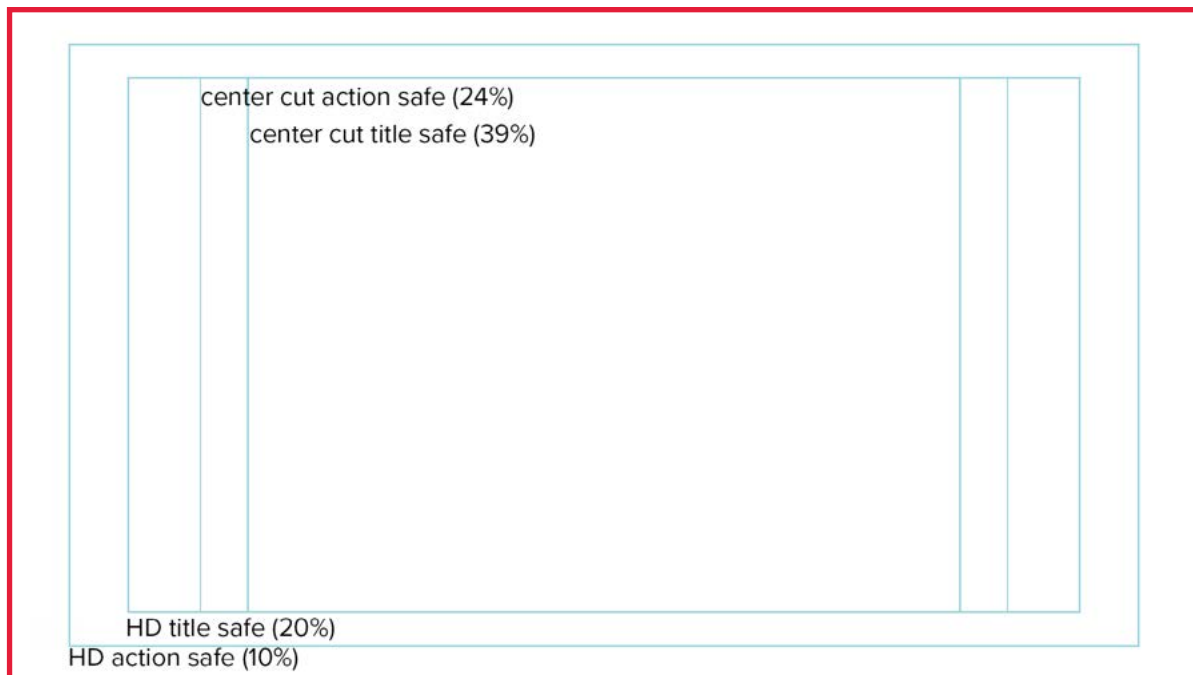**CALL SHEET TEMPLATE:** Link

GENERAL RELEASE TEMPLATE: Link

TALENT RELEASE TEMPLATE: Link

MATERIAL RELEASE TEMPLATE: Link

LOCATION RELEASE TEMPLATE: Link

LOG SHEET TEMPLATE: Link

HD AND CENTER CUT SAFE GUIDES:

center cut action safe (24%)
center cut title safe (39%)

HD title safe (20%)
HD action safe (10%)

SHARE THESE TIPS

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