

**A STEP-BY-STEP
GUIDE TO THE
ART & FINANCE
OF VIDEO
PRODUCTION**

SCENE TAKE ROW
**THE BUSINESS OF
BUSINESS
VIDEOS**

Bookmarks Share Help

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

1. Planning your corporate video

Step 1 - Determine the Purpose of Your Video

Step 2 - Define Your Target Audience

Step 3 - Begin Planning the Distribution of Your Video

2. Pre-Production

Step 1 - Selecting a Production Company

Step 2 - Developing an Outline

Step 3 - Budgets and Contracts

FYI - National/Regional Distribution Case Studies

3. Production

Step 1 - Scheduling

Step 2 - Revisions and Approvals

Step 3 - Your Completed Video

FYI - Four Sample Video Productions and their Budgets

SUMMARY

FORMS APPENDIX:

Sample Scriptwriting Contract

Sample Production Contract

Master Budget

Company Profile

FOREWORD

With proper planning and organization, producing a video can be a fascinating, complex and enjoyable experience. This is achieved when the corporate client and the production company work together as a team.

Everything should fall easily into place, and the outcome is a powerful marketing, sales or training tool that can quickly pay for itself many times over.

Unfortunately, many clients are unfamiliar with the video production process—where to begin, what steps to take to finish the project, how to get a singular message across so that the video creates the desired response from its audience.

This booklet has been designed to answer those questions and help guide you in creating a successful and effective corporate video.

By requesting this manual, you've already taken the first—and most important—step towards learning the video production process.

PLANNING YOUR CORPORATE VIDEO

Step 1 - Determine the Purpose of Your Video

Effective communication is determined by its clarity of purpose. Your corporate video should be created to convey one single message, promote one single product or service, or express one singular idea or goal. The key to a successful video is keeping it simple and limited to a solitary goal or intent.

The video production process begins by choosing the purpose of your video:

- How do you want your target audience to respond?
- What are you trying to get them to do?
- Do you want them to buy more, do more, work faster, sell more or spend more money?

Define your video's purpose and how you want your audience to react. Then, write it down. Keeping this purpose in mind throughout production is the most important part of creating a successful video.

Step 2 - Define Your Target Audience

Identify specific demographics of who you most want to reach with your video:

- Clients, employees or consumers?
- What is their profession?
- What is their age range?
- Ready to act now...or indifferent?

Videos made for different target audiences might convey the same idea, but their style, message, content, mood (and even quality) can widely vary. Being specific is key.

Do research as to what motivates your target audience. Ultimately, the selection of settings, background music, flashy special effects or simple straight cuts-and-fades will be geared towards what makes your demographic pay attention, listen and then act.

All these factors will, of course, affect your video's budget.

Step 3 - Begin Planning the Distribution of Your Video

This step may seem a little premature, but before you produce a video, you'll want to consider how to reach your target audience.

There are quite a few corporate videos on YouTube that, over a period of a year or so, have only had 100 views. Others reach 100,000+ unique views. The difference is in planning. Video can be, and will be, your most powerful promotional and marketing tool.

To achieve its goal, your video needs to be seen by its target audience. Achieving this requires both a solid distribution plan and room in the budget to execute that plan.

Generally, your corporate video is intended either for in-house audiences (a training or inspirational video for employees) or to outside organizations or individuals (corporate clients and/or consumers). The video may be distributed and viewed in many ways online through distribution channels and social media outlets.

If it's planned properly, online video distribution through YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook, Twitter and others can usually give you the greatest bang for the buck. Just be sure your video is always embedded on your own website as well. Building your online presence by directing traffic to your site helps build brand loyalty, dramatically raises awareness and increases sales.

Google has discovered that the rate at which people enter a site and remain there without immediately hitting the 'back' button is only about 10%. That rate increases to 40% when a video is present. Web surfers average 42-seconds on a text-only site versus 5-minutes 50-seconds on a site with video—an 833% increase.

Don't write off DVDs. While the internet is the most popular way of viewing videos, DVD's are still a viable means of distribution. A DVD sent through the mail gets viewed—people are too curious not to look. For those corporations who limit employee access to video portals at work, a DVD comes in like a Trojan horse through the mail and can make a big difference. Often, the DVD duplication, packaging, and distribution can be handled by your production company and can be incorporated into the production contract.

National/Regional Distribution Case Studies

Online video is becoming a first stop for many consumers. It is akin to what the website was a decade ago—something that gives you an edge over competitors.

You now have opportunities to reach the public in ways previously accessible only to major corporations with large TV advertising budgets.

Streamlining Business and Increasing Revenue

Directfix.com is a company which sells replacement parts and accessories for smartphones and other electronics. Their business faced a unique and constant customer service challenge: instructing lay people how to take apart electronic gadgets and install fragile components.

Traditional instruction manuals could not answer all the questions, so Directfix.com's customer service call center became a major component of their business. In 2007, the company began posting how-to videos on YouTube. One of these first videos showed how to take apart an iPhone and has been viewed more than two million times.

Directfix.com's videos have now replaced their instruction manuals and reduced customer service inquiries by more than 50%. They were able to save printing costs on manuals and reduce their overall customer service budget by 40%.

For Directfix.com, their investment in videos has allowed their company to streamline their business structure and increase revenue.

Selling a Product

If the customer cannot come to you, and you don't want to send a salesperson on the road, online video may be the best way to demonstrate a product.

Ceilume is a 40-person ceiling tiles business which grosses approximately \$5 million a year in sales. Their YouTube videos are designed to help customers choose among 30 different styles of ceiling tiles. These videos are embedded on the company website and draw search engine results with targeted key words.

Ceilume's "Ask the Ceiling Tile Guy" videos have attracted more than 1.7 million views. Company President Ed Davis says that video has helped increase sales a minimum of 15% each year.

Raising Awareness

Outdoor apparel and gear company Columbia Sportswear launched a series of videos showcasing its latest breakthrough: the Omni-Heat product line. The super-insulated technology keeps wearers comfortable in the coldest climates. To demonstrate, the company produced six videos featuring people performing stunts in extreme cold, such as swimming in an ice hole.

Using TubeMogul (an internet video distribution system), the company released its videos to targeted audiences through 500 video sharing sites with one action. These promotional videos received 137,194 user-initiated views within the first few weeks of the campaign— a large reach for a fraction of the cost of a print or TV campaign.

Small Business Benefits

A business attorney spent \$1,500 to have a video produced for his website. The video is straightforward and simple without a lot of extras. It brings the attorney several new leads per month and has paid for itself many times over.

The Pre-Production Phase of Video Producing

Step 1 - Choosing the Right Video Production Company

Selecting a production company to work with is often done one of three ways:

- 1) By Recommendation: chances are, someone you know has worked with a specific video company and experienced great results. Ask your business associates, clients or friends for their personal recommendations.
- 2) By Reputation: large production houses advertise regularly in business publications and directories. Their reputation may be known in your area.
- 3) By Trial and Error: the internet abounds with companies listed under "Video Production Services" and "Motion Picture Studios."

Pay close attention to whether the video producer is friendly, eager to answer your questions and possesses a good knowledge of technical information regarding the filming and editing process.

A reputable firm will take the time to answer your questions and ease any anxieties you may have. Once you've obtained references, rate guides, and preliminary information, you should have a list of some very favorable companies.

Now, you'll want to consider the creative ability of the video production company. Do they seem able to translate your ideas into a comprehensive, smoothly flowing outline and script? Do they possess the ability to produce a quality video that will get your message across? Do they understand the purpose of your video?

Lastly, consider the personal rapport between you and your potential video production team. Remember, you'll be working very closely with these individuals. Do you have confidence in them and feel comfortable putting your video production in their hands? Likely, they will also be sizing you up. Good rapport and mutual confidence is as important to them as it should be to you.

Step 2 - Developing an Outline

Prior to this point, your dollar investment has been zero. Now, you'll begin to spend part of your video budget. Most production companies require a fee to provide the research necessary to develop an outline. This fee will vary depending on the amount of research or preliminary gathering of background information that is involved. This gathering of information is necessary, because the production team needs to learn about your business.

During this phase, the production team will likely ask for statistical information on your company. They may also ask to talk to different corporate executives, as well as visit your place(s) of business. By doing so, they obtain a first-hand view of how your business works, what makes it special and how best to maximize the impact of your production.

The research and development period will require your cooperation in order to assure a successful video production.

The typical fee for this service is about \$60 an hour, plus reimbursement of client approved expenses such as travel, mileage reimbursement, or lodging. Please refer to our Forms Appendix in the back of this manual for a sample of our research and development contract, titled: "Video Scriptwriting Agreement."

At the completion of this crucial phase, you will receive a complete outline from the production company which will require your attention. Now is the time to make revisions and offer suggestions. Changes at this point in the production are made easily. Later on, when the production is under way, revisions can be both costly and laborious. Your production company should work closely with you during this time to insure that the outline fully demonstrates your company's policies and views and is in-line with your overall marketing campaign.

An outline should remain flexible. It is simply a good starting point for the ideas and message that the video will communicate. Ultimately, the outline should guide the video rather than limit it.

Your approval or rejection of the outline ends this step of the video production process. Hopefully, you will be pleased with the results and your approval will move the production to its next step, which is setting budgets and the signing of contracts. However, should you find the outline unacceptable; your contractual obligation with the production company will end. The video company retains their fee, and the outline becomes yours to use as you wish.

Step 3 - Budgets and Contracts

In this step, the production company should present you with a budget based on your approval of the outline. Be sure the budget includes all aspects of the remainder of the production, such as music licenses, talent, location fees, etc.

The budget should be all-inclusive. Refer to our Master Production Budget form in the Forms Appendix to see what should be included in the total and how that total is reached.

Most of your budget will be spent on services. What you are purchasing is a digital video Master file and the rights to reproduce it as often as you'd like.

With the approval of the budget, you will be asked to sign a Video Production Contract (see the Forms Appendix for a sample). Production contracts vary, but the general language is normally the same.

Most contracts will specify payment terms. Video productions are typically paid for in three payments— one-half due upon the signing of the contract, one-quarter due prior to the beginning of principal videography, and the final quarter due upon your approval of the final, finished digital video Master.

Production Begins!

Step 1 - Scheduling

The completion date of your video should be specified in your contract. However, this time frame is usually negotiable. It is to the video production company's advantage to deliver the video to you as soon as possible, but they should resist sacrificing quality or effort in order to deliver the video prematurely. If you have a specific deadline for the completion of your video, you should allow two to three months for the total production. In other words, plan ahead.

Step 2 - Approvals and Revisions

Please note that our sample production contract has built-in approvals of the video at various stages in its development. These are typically the approval of the script, the approval of the rough-cut edit and the approval of the final digital Master. Revisions made too late in the game can be costly. We recommend that you consider changes while the video is still in paper form as an outline or script. These revisions cost you nothing and are easily accomplished.

You will be asked to approve the rough-cut edit of your video production. The rough-cut edit is the first video assembly of the production in continuous form. Revisions and suggestions are still fairly welcome at this point, because changes to the rough-cut edit are still relatively easy to make.

Once the final editing has begun, however, revisions to the video will be time-consuming and costly. That is why it is crucial to have your full attention to carefully evaluating the video at each stage of the approval process. It is most important to evaluate the flow of the video and how easily it gets your message across. Also, verify that the statements and ideas presented in the video are factual and best represent your company.

You will most likely leave technical matters such as special effects or background music up to the discretion of the video producer (with your approval, of course).

Step 3 - Your Completed Video Production

Rough-cut editing is often performed with temporary titles, narration and other elements to judge the structure and flow of the video. When this version of the video is completed and approved, more polished titles, special effects, music and narration are produced and rendered in the fine-cut edit. This finished video is downloaded as a final digital Master. This is the file that you will receive digitally, thereby completing the contractual obligations of the production company. You will use this Master to run duplicate copies as well as posting on various websites and social media sites.

FOUR SAMPLES OF ACTUAL VIDEO PRODUCTIONS

(Or...What Your Money Buys)

We've included this portion of the manual to give you an idea of what some typical video productions might cost and how they are used. You can consider these four examples when deciding what type of video production is right for your company and budget.

- 1) A three-minute marketing video for a hospital, which is used to market and sell occupational health services to businesses in a regional market. It took three weeks to produce and was filmed in one location, using real hospital employees. **TOTAL BUDGET: \$5,000.**
- 2) A 14-minute morale booster for a Fortune 500 company, which will be shown to all employees. It includes name actors, a great deal of aerial photography and specially designed and built sets. Filmed in several locations, it took nine months to produce. **TOTAL BUDGET: \$375,000.**
- 3) A 14-minute corporate image video for an emerging high-tech company whose audience is material design engineers. It was filmed using real people in several nearby locations. It also included space footage from NASA and assembly line footage from Chrysler. The video took three months to complete. **TOTAL BUDGET: \$25,000.**
- 4) A three-part video totaling 90-minutes for a legal publisher. The subject is a lecture conducted by a famous attorney on brief writing and oral arguments. It is being sold to attorneys and to law schools for \$500. The video series took two months to produce. **TOTAL BUDGET: \$11,000.**

All four videos succeeded in reaching their goals. All but one video included script, narration, titles, and editing. The exception was the legal series where the lecture was the script. All four productions are broadcast quality which means that they meet FCC requirements for broadcast television.

When reviewing budgets for video productions, remember the following:

- A well produced video should serve your company for at least five years.
- Some of the most effective business video productions are surprisingly short. Shorter videos are generally clear, concise, to the point and don't risk boring their audience. While the length of the video doesn't always determine its cost, many shorter programs will be less expensive than longer ones.
- The value of your video is more often determined by the care and planning of the producer than by how much you spend. It is your producer's job to deliver a video program that accomplishes your company's goal.

SUMMARY

We have prepared this manual with two key points in mind: to make you an informed client and to solicit your business.

We believe informed clients make *better* clients—they possess the knowledge of what it costs to produce a video, where the money is spent and exactly what they receive for their investment.

We also believe that the more you know about the video business, the more you will appreciate our work and dedication to our customers.

If you have any questions or comments regarding any of the points made or implied in this manual, please contact us. We will be happy to clarify any points you wish to discuss, without charge or obligation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Craig Otto". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Creative Director
Mediamakers USA LLC

Mediamakers USA produces exceptional video to build your brand, market your product and promote your business. With 10+ years experience, our work has been recognized for awards and featured on network television. We are a full-service social media marketing and advertising agency—we're here to handle all of your company's needs: social media campaigns, content creation, marketing, branding...and video production.

References are available upon request.

Mediamakers USA
77 West 15th Street, Suite #6A
New York, NY 10011
212.255.6127
info@mediamakersUSA.com



MEDIAMAKERS USA

77 WEST 15TH STRET, SUITE #6A, NEW YORK, NY 10011 | 212.255.6127

VIDEO SCRIPTWRITING AGREEMENT

Client: _____

Date: _____

Title: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

When signed by both parties, below, the following will constitute our agreement:

Mediamakers USA LLC agrees to provide _____ hours of scripting and pre-production planning services for a video depicting _____.

We will make every effort to write a script and production plan that meets your needs. Your active participation in this process will help us create an approved script that becomes a blueprint for the filming and editing of your video, should you decide to proceed.

Additional scripting services are available at: \$60/hour or \$480/day subject to your prior approval.

With your approval of the script, we will attempt to secure a separate contract with you for the production of this video. You are not obligated to enter an agreement for the production of the video with us or anyone else.

In full payment for our undertakings contained herein, you agree to pay us and we agree to accept the sum of \$_____ payable as follows:

\$_____ Deposit, upon execution of this agreement

\$_____ First payment to be made on the _____ day of our services or on _____, whichever comes first

\$_____ Final payment to be made on the _____ day of our services or on _____, whichever comes first

Accepted and approved by:

Accepted and approved by:

Title: _____ Company: _____

Creative Director, Mediamakers USA LLC

Date: _____

Date: _____



MEDIAMAKERS USA

77 WEST 15TH STRET, SUITE #6A, NEW YORK, NY 10011 | 212.255.6127

VIDEO PRODUCTION AGREEMENT

Client: _____

Date: _____

Title: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

When signed by you and us, the following will constitute our agreement:

Mediamakers USA LLC agrees to produce _____ video(s) based on the script dated: ____ - ____ - _____. This video will have a running time of approximately _____ minutes and _____ seconds.

We will provide _____ days of principal videography at the location(s) specified in the script and will supply all necessary equipment/personnel.

We will provide all rough-cut editing according to the approved script. You shall have the right to screen and approve this rough cut edit and will apprise us of any changes within thee (3) days of screening.

Upon your approval of the final rough cut edit, unless subject to causes beyond our control, a final digital Master will be completed and delivered to you electronically within two (2) weeks.

Cancellation of a scheduled filming or editing session with less than 72-hours notice will incur a kill fee of \$350.

In full payment for our undertakings contained herein, you agree to pay us and we agree to accept the sum of \$_____ payable as follows:

\$_____ Deposit, upon execution of this agreement

\$_____ First payment to be made two (2) business days prior to first day of principal videography

\$_____ Final payment to be made upon approval of the final Digital Master

Accepted and approved by:

Accepted and approved by:

Title: _____ Company: _____

Creative Director, Mediamakers USA LLC

Date: _____

Date: _____



MEDIAMAKERS USA

77 WEST 15TH STRET, SUITE #6A, NEW YORK, NY 10011 | 212.255.6127

MASTER PRODUCTION BUDGET

Production #: _____

Date: _____

Client: _____

Contact: _____

Production

Camera Equipment: _____

Sound Equipment: _____

Grip Equipment: _____

Booms/Dollies: _____

Aerial Photography: _____

Director of Photography: _____

Audio Engineer: _____

Grip: _____

Production Assistants: _____

Materials (Stock): _____

Graphics: _____

Location Fees: _____

Crew Support: _____

Props: _____

Transportation: _____

Misc. Production Fees: _____

Production Subtotal: _____

Post-Production

Rough-Cut Editing: _____

Fine-Cut Editing: _____

Add-Ons (Video Effects): _____

B-Roll Footage: _____

Audio Sweetening: _____

Chyron (Credits): _____

Misc. Post-Production: _____

Post-Production Subtotal: _____

Above the Line

Producer: _____

Director: _____

Staff: _____

Office Overhead: _____

Casting: _____

Cast Payroll: _____

P&W - AFTRA: _____

Music Rights: _____

Taxes, Non-Payroll: _____

Insurance: _____

Contingency: _____

Above the Line

Subtotal: _____

— ABOVE THE LINE —

TOTAL: _____

— BELOW THE LINE —

TOTAL: _____

TOTAL

BUDGET: _____