

Steps of a Successful Video Production

This will give you the basics.

Step 1: Defining the need

Establish the purpose of the production; who will the audience be? Determine the key objective for the video? Will the production introduce your company, sell a product or service or train employees? What feeling would you like to convey to the audience? There should be only one key objective with any others being secondary and supportive to that focus. Once you have decided on your objective, be aware of your supportive key facts/points within that objective. An experienced production company will come up with a creative way to convey your message.

Next determine the following:

1. Determine the amount you have available for your budget. The budget will be determined by your production needs, experience of the company and to some extent geographically. Duplications are normally a separate item rather than being included in the production costs. Production costs are tailored to client needs.
2. The finished length of the production. Most promotional videos should be 3 to 7 minutes, 10 minutes is maximum if the content is in narrative story form. Communications videos are best in 10 to 15 minutes. Training can be longer.
3. Who will develop the script, your company or the production company? Using a professional script writer can add creativity and continuity to the script. If you write the script, expect the production company to review it for order and editing. What looks good on paper is sometimes different on screen.
4. Will you need a professional on-camera talent or voice talent? Male or female?
5. What type of music bed would you like?
6. Will the videotaping be on-location, in a studio or both?
7. One person should be selected to be the production company contact. Determine who will be best suited based on knowledge of the production needs, decision making authority and time available.
8. The completion date.

Step 2: Selecting the company

- Ask friends or business associates for referrals.
- Check both the phonebook and online. Compare what you are looking for with the ads.
- Call a few companies
- Be prepared to share the details of your production needs listed above.
- Find out how long the company has been in business, about their contracts and terms of payment, samples of their work and a referral list.
- After you have called a few companies select three to go and visit.
- 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.

- Make sure your contract explains in detail what you can expect from the production company as well as what you will be expected to provide for the production company. Video production is a team collaboration.

Step 3: Pre-Production

Once you've given the go-ahead it's time to get to work. Pre-production is most important as it sets the stage for all future aspects of production. This phase will require the most client participation/involvement as there are many decisions to be made. A production meeting will be scheduled to determine the production time line.

A script will be developed based on all the information in your objectives (unless you will be creating the script). The director will develop style and approach options for the project and the script will begin to take shape. Generally you will receive a treatment, one draft and a final of the script as part of the budget. Clients are part of the process at each stage of production to assure quality control. The production company will require a client sign-off on the script prior to sending it to the voice talent or proceeding into the production phase. Sign-off minimizes future mistakes.

Step 4: Production

Production includes the actual recording of the video, be it on location, or in a studio. The narration is also recorded at this time, if applicable. The client contact should be present during all videotaping sessions.

Step 5: Post-Production

Post-Production includes editing your video, developing graphics and selecting music.

Step 6: Fulfillment

The production can be mastered to DVD, CD-ROM, a multimedia presentation and/or converted for use on the web.

Step 7: Duplication

Duplicating and packaging the video is the final step. There are several options available in this stage. The type of packaging will need to be selected and the CD or DVD label will need to be created. There are a variety of casing options available to best suit your needs. The label designs are available in black and white or color.

We hope this 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!