Video Guidance Document

This document is designed for researchers wanting to produce a high-quality video to summarise a project… with little or no previous experience.

Introduction

Video making has changed in recent years, with the availability of smart phones, semi-professional audio equipment and free editing tools. It is now possible, with a little planning, to make a high-quality video with little equipment and previous experience. Have a go! Ask your colleagues for (constructive) criticism and learn as you go. Following the guidelines in this document will help avoid making common mistakes, and allow the video to be interesting and engaging to the desired audience. Additionally, how the video will be disseminated is worth considering before making, as the video style or content may change.

- **Who is the audience?** What will be interesting and engaging to them (English, 2015)? How you can avoid jargon if it is being aimed at the general public (Smith and Bartlmae, 2017)?
- **What message am I trying to get across?** What am I trying to gain from making this video? If there are many messages/ideas it may be worth making more than one video to not confuse the viewer (Maguire, 2016).
- **What is the style?** Informal/formal? Introductory or explanatory? Problem/solution? Or perhaps narrative? Style will be influenced by the video purpose and intended audience.
- **What tone do you want it to have?** Conversational, straightforward, informative?
- **Where will the video be uploaded?** The recommend length and style will change depending which site you are using. For example: YouTube/Vimeo: ~3mins, Facebook: ~ 30 -120 sec with subtitles/no sound, Twitter: ~30 sec, to support a presentation/website ~5mins+ (Gotter, 2016).
- **What's the best social media strategy?** You may make a great video, but people need to know that it exists and where to find it (Reed, 2015)!
- **What's already out there?** Have a search for examples in your subject area to note the style – does your video want to be entirely different or in keeping with the others? (Smith, Bartlmae, 2017).
- **What timescale are you working to?** If it needs to be made imminently, it would be best to have a focused, simpler and shorter video (English, 2015).

Content

Planning what will happen in the video can be time consuming, but it is better to think ahead about all the different elements you may need *before* you start filming.

- **Storyline:** how will you produce an interesting summary? Is there a practical/pictorial way of explaining your project (e.g. like a scientific experiment)? Creating a storyboard (a sketch for each shot) may assist in planning this, and help you visualise what will be happening when.
- **Speech:** Is the video going to be narrated? Is it going to be in an interview style (Maguire, 2016)? Will it be presenter led (voiceover) or neutral?
- **Script:** Even if only a rough one, it is a good idea and will keep the video flowing smoothly (Raghav, 2014).
- **Footage:** Do you need additional shots, perhaps from additional locations? Or will you need to import some? Editing will merge them together.

- **Photographs:** Will you include still photos in addition to moving image? Will these need editing to improve quality/relevance?
- **Props:** Will you need to use any?
- **Interviewing:** Do you need to **interview** anyone?

If the latter is a yes, here is some interviewing advice:

- Place (wireless or lavalier) microphone in a place on interviewees clothing which will be subjected to the least noise disturbance (e.g. clothing movement). If you are not using a microphone, place the recording device as close as possible to the person speaking.
- Pause between the answer to a question and the start of a next one (makes editing easier).
- Get them to look at the interviewer, not the camera (HERG, 2018).

Filming

Before you start, familiarise yourself with any equipment and editing software you will use. Don't be afraid to have a few practice runs, especially if you are using a script!

Before you start filming:

- **What equipment are you using?** It is not necessary to have a video camera nowadays – a high quality phone (such as an iPhone – guidance [here](#)) will be acceptable. HD (high definition) will be better quality to use, so check the recording device has this facility.
- **Will you be using editing software?** There are free, pre-installed programmes available such as Windows [Movie Maker](#) and [iMovie](#) (as the Apple equivalent). These are typically suitable to produce a good quality outcome. Click the above links to watch YouTube tutorials.
- **Location:** Find a place which is interesting and relevant to film.
- **Rehearse!** This overcomes feeling strange talking to the camera, and any timing issues.
- If necessary, people appearing in the video should sign a consent form.

So the preparation is done, and now you're ready to go. One very important thing to check: make sure that the device you are using to record on has enough **memory space** (Bernazzani, 2018).

While you are filming watch out for:

- **Shaky shots**: Use a tripod or camera stabilizer at all times (Bernazzani, 2018).
- **Filming**: Make shots as you would photos and keep shot steady for at least 5-10 seconds. Avoid too much zooming during shots. If using a smartphone do not zoom in at all! Get closer to your subject if you need a closer shot
- **Orientation:** Film horizontally for better viewing on mobile devices (Bernazzani, 2018).
- **Lighting:** Find a place which is not too bright or dark. If filming outside try to hit the 'golden hours' (2 hours after sunrise or 2 hours before sunset). If filming inside, pick a room full of natural light, or if this is not possible, bring your own lights (HubSpot, 2018). Your subject should be of the same brightness or brighter than the background. Do not interview a person against a bright sky.
- **Composition:** use ['Rule of Thirds'](#) to get the most aesthetically pleasing shot.

And…Common Quality issues:

- **Sound quality**: watch out for noisy areas and wind. Preferably use a lavalier microphone, but if just using a phone, place closer to the person speaking. Consider using a wind protection device such as Rycote and place subject with back to wind.
- **Image quality**: is the subject framed well? Correct lighting?
- **Timing**: does the speech match the imagery? Subtitles on time?

Final Touches

Now you have your video/s, it's time to compile and edit them. Below are some commonly used elements to create the final outcome – note that additional visuals all need to be a consistent style (i.e. font all the same type, colour themes).

- **Shot selection:** Choose which parts of the interview you would like to use and in which order *before* you start editing.
- **Background music**: this should be complementary to the tone of the video and appropriate for the audience (check copyright violations before using).
- **Narrative speech**: this should be in a clear voice, and match the speed of the footage.
- **Subtitles:** will these need to be in an additional language?
- **Transitions:** use to make a smoother switch between one clip to the next.
- **Special effects:** Be careful using special effect. Most of the time they are distracting.

Social Media

Finally, don't forget to take to social media to promote and advertise the video you have made! Make sure you have **auto-play** ticked as an option (for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), which means users are encouraged to watch your video, as it's already playing.

- Decide on a 'release date' and write some posts in the lead up to build momentum. Posts can be scheduled via sites such as TweetDeck (for Twitter) or the scheduling facility on an organisation's Facebook page.
- Promote the video in any Bios (place where you provide information on your profile) on any social media accounts eg: Twitter, Instagram.
- Pin the post about the video to the top of your page eg: Twitter, Facebook.
- Use trending hashtags or current topics of interest in your posts to help boost viewings.
- Tag relevant people or organisations in your posts promoting the video.
- More useful tips can be found here.

Finally…

If you want to track the success of the video, you can easily see how many viewings it has gathered on YouTube, but if you want more detailed results, or are using another medium, it's worth a bit of research into video metrics (English, 2016).

Reference list

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Raghav (2014), *A Beginner's Guide to Animated Video Making for business*, Animaker, [Online]. Available at: https://blog.animaker.com/beginners-guide-to-animated-video-making/. Last accessed 26/02/18.

Reed. M. (2015), *HOW TO TURN YOUR RESEARCH FINDINGS INTO A VIDEO THAT PEOPLE ACTUALLY WANT TO WATCH*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.mayaproject.org/blog/2015/11/15/how-to-turn-your-research-findings-into-a-video-that-people-want-to-watch. Last accessed 25/02/2018.

Smith R. and Bartlmae E. (2017), *Top Tips on Short Videos for Bioeconomy Researchers*, presentation at CommBeBiz Webinar, 18th December 2017.

Hyperlinks:
Social media strategy: http://www.mayaproject.org/blog/2015/10/27/create-a-social-media-strategy-for-your-research-that-delivers-impact
Storyboard: https://photography.tutsplus.com/tutorials/how-to-make-a-storyboard-for-video--cms-26374
Movie Maker: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O99NXVHfqMs
iMovie: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gqNXhDEFgEk
Rule of Thirds: https://www.photographymad.com/pages/view/rule-of-thirds
Music Copyright Violation: http://tubularinsights.com/copyrighted-music-in-video/
TweetDeck: http://www.razorsocial.com/tweetdeck-for-twitter-management/
Social media tips: https://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/26-ways-to-use-video-for-your-social-media-marketing/
Video metrics: https://www.skeletonproductions.com/insights/video-metrics