Transportation Outreach Planner

Public Outreach Strategies

Video Production and Webcasts

Quick Links
Toolbox Navigation
- Recommended Target Groups
- Strategy Class
- Strategy Types
- Description
- Special Uses
- When to Use
- Cost
- Time
- Implementation Guidelines and Suggestions
- Lesson Learned/Challenges
- Case Studies
- For Further Information
- Sources
- Provide Feedback

Recommended Target Groups
Education
College Education
High School Diploma
No High School Diploma

Language
Creole
Other
Spanish

Disability
Hearing Impaired
Other
Physically Challenged
Sight Impaired

Income
Low Income
Middle to Affluent

Vehicle Ownership
Non-vehicle Owner
Vehicle Owner

Race and Ethnicity
Race and Ethnicity

Age

Seniors

Working Age Adults

Youth

Strategy Class

- General

Strategy Types

- Educational

Description

Videos are powerful communication tools that can capture live action, graphics, and audio effects. They can be used to present information to the public through a variety of formats, including webcasts, and television broadcasts. Through the use of the internet and social media, video communication can be an effective means of reaching out to the public, depending on the cost of production. [1]

Special Uses

Agencies can use videos and webcasts for: [2]

- Project overviews
- Demonstrations of planning scenarios or project alternatives
- Educational purposes (i.e. webinars)
- Advertising or promotions
- Documentaries of case studies or planning processes
- Creating a permanent record of public hearings, workshops, and presentations

When to Use

Agencies can use videos in a variety of ways to enhance their public involvement efforts. Videos can be used to launch and promote new projects or policies, and to raise awareness. They can also be used to educate the public and to establish trust and credibility during times of crisis management. In addition, agencies can use videos to encourage media coverage and enhance social media marketing. [3]

Cost

* * * * Very High (Above $50000)

The cost of producing a video depends on the production that is required, as well as the length, quality and content of the video. As a result, it can range from $900 to above $50,000. Although professional production can be the most expensive portion of creating a video, it is best to have a professional production company oversee the process rather than trying to complete it in-house. The only exception would be if in-house staff has the experience and equipment to produce quality videos. Other expenses related to video production include permits, liability insurance, equipment rental, announcers, as well as editing and post production costs.

Low (up to $999)	*	*Disclaimer:* The cost estimates provided are intended to be a
Moderate ($1,000 to $9,999)	* *	guide. Project costs will vary depending on the size and nature
High ($10,000 to $50,000)	* * *	of the project.
Very High (Above $50,000)	* * * *	

Time

* 1 to 3 months

Most videos can be produced within a month, depending on the scope of the video and how much original filming will be done. Developing the concept, creating the script and completing post production editing are generally the most time consuming phases of video production.

1 to 3 months	*	*Disclaimer:* The time estimates are approximations. The
6 months to a year	* *	duration of a project may vary depending on various factors,
Multiyear	* * *	including size and budget.

Implementation Guidelines and Suggestions

The following serve as recommended guidelines and suggestions for creating and using videos: [4]

- **Determine the objective of the video and develop a media strategy for its use.** Before creating the video, determine how it will be used, the message to be conveyed, and how it will be distributed and promoted. The response to these items will help to guide production. For example, a video to be used for television advertising requires higher resolution than a video to be displayed on-line.
- **Develop the core message of the video and create a promotional title for the piece.** The message needs to be clear and concise. The title is also important, particularly if the video will be placed on-line or disseminated through social media formats. The title needs to be bold and powerful. It needs to convey the message, attract people to click on the video, and have key words that will trigger on-line searches.
- **Determine the content of the video.** Once the core message is created, agencies need to determine the content. The video should be able to stand alone, in the event people only see it once. As such, the message must be clear. In developing the content, agencies need to determine the following: [4]
    - <u>Length of the video</u> - On-line videos tend to be two minutes or less. Videos for television advertising are typically 30 seconds. Webinars and documentaries are generally 30 minutes to 60 minutes long.
    - <u>Script</u> - The script refers to the words that will be used throughout the video to convey the message. The script should be kept simple. When developing the script, it is important to determine if it will be read as a voice-over by an announcer or displayed graphically. It should be noted that adding text to a video helps to increase retention. The script needs to be consistent with printed materials and should provide contact information at the end in order for the public to request further information.
    - <u>Images and timing sequence</u> - Agencies need to determine the images to be displayed and their sequence. This will enable to agency to determine if original filming is necessary or if existing video stock can be used. If the agency does not have the required images and cannot afford original shooting, it can purchase videos and photographs from on-line photo stock sites.
    - <u>Music</u> - The music needs to be carefully selected to ensure it creates the correct mood and is consistent with the message. Once the music is selected, the images must be timed to the music.

- **Decide if the video will be produced by in-house staff or outsourced to a professional company.** Some videos can be produced by staff (i.e. video recordings of meetings and events). However, most videos require high quality production in order to ensure that the piece does not appear amateurish. Furthermore, professional production companies will have the necessary permits, liability insurance, and requirements needed for filming and production. They will also be able to guide the agency with any copyright issues. Universities and schools that have media programs can provide a cost effective alternative to hiring a production company.
- **If the video will be uploaded to YouTube or another video site, agencies should ensure that the video is optimized for on-line viewing.** Below are key elements to keep in mind when preparing a video for on-line distibution: [5]
    - Resize and edit the video for on-line viewing
    - Create a title, description, tags, and category in order to facilitate searches
    - Brand the video with the URL of the agency's website or other information
    - Include a share option for people send to their friends and colleagues
    - Provide a way for people to register for updates, additional information, or newsletters
    - Be aware of any copyright regulations and restrictions that may apply to video sites, such as YouTube

- **Promote and distribute the video.** After the video is complete, agencies need to focus on promotion and distribution. Below are several methods that agencies can use to promote and distribute videos: [6]
    - Include a link in Email campaigns, Email newsletters, Twitter, Facebook, and other Social Media sites
    - Post on the agency's website
    - Upload to YouTube, Vimeo, Viddler, Blip.tv and other sites, such as Goggle Video
    - Provide copies to bloggers, interest groups and community organizations
    - Broadcast on television
    - Display in public spaces or as part of exhibits or information kiosks
    - Provide copies to libraries and other government agencies

- **Track the success of the video.** Agencies need to track the video's metrics in order to determine how successful

the promotion was in reaching the public. Videos that are posted on-line are easy to track through the video sites. The key metrics to monitor for on-line videos are the views per month, the views in the first 30 days, and the cost per view. Videos that are placed on broadcast on television are more difficult to track. Nonetheless, agencies can develop a baseline metric to determine if the video had any impact after it aired on television. For example, agencies can monitor if there is an increase in calls for information. [7]

Recommended target demographics

Videos have the capacity to reach a broad audience and can be adapted to various demographics. They represent one of the most effective tools for communicating with people who are hard to reach or who have language barriers, since videos can be produced in multiple languages and in formats that can accommodate people with disabilities. Because they can be distributed in a variety of ways, the method of distribution can be customized to meet the needs of desired target demographic. [8]

Lessons Learned/Challenges

Below are key points to keep in mind when producing a video: [9]

- **Post the video on YouTube and other social media sites in order to increase public access.** The more places a video is posted, the more accessible it will be to the general public.
- **Keep the video simple.** Videos that are too long or try to include too much information can be confusing. If a video is too long, it should be divided into different parts or into a series. Most videos should not be longer than two minutes. Webinars and documentaries can be longer, but care should also be taken to keep such videos to the point.
- **Know the target demographic and how they are likely to view the video.** Understanding how the target audience is likely to consume information will help determine distribution. For example, some people may be more inclined to view television, while others rely more on social media sites.
- **Before producing a video, research the latest trends in video production and distribution to avoid unnecessary expenses and the use of outdated technology.**
- **All videos should be made to accommodate people with disabilities.** This can be done through close captioning the and by providing narration for those with sight limitations. If using text, the letters must be large enough for people to be able to read.
- **Before using any images or music, agencies need to make sure there are no copyright or licensing issues.** It is important to have the licensing rights to any material that is used in a video in order to avoid any potential legal issues.
- **Agencies can use animation to simulate complex processes or to illustrate different stages of a project.** Through animation and graphics, agencies can show the public images of proposed projects so they have a better understanding of what they will look like. Animation can also be useful for creating simulations of safety scenarios.

Case Studies

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation used Interactive Flash animation to demonstrate the proper use of roundabouts. This safety video shows how animation can be effectively used to communicate complex messages to the public. As part of their safety campaign, they also produced brochures to complement the video. (http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/safety/motorist/roaddesign/roundabout-works.htm). [10]

The San Antonio-Bexar County MPO developed Spanish language videos to reach out to a large segment of the population that had been underserved by traditional methods of communication. Since 40 percent of the residents in the County spoke Spanish at home, the MPO sought to expand its methods of communication with this segment of the population. They created four Spanish language videos explaining who they are and what they do, their Walkable Communities Program, Air Quality and Transportation; and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Due to these efforts, the San Antonio-Bexar County MPO won the 2009 AMPO National Award for Outstanding Public Engagement in Metropolitan Transportation Planning (http://www.ampo.org/content/index.php?pid=214). [11]

For Further Information

How to use Video Marketing as a Promotional Tool: This article provides information for effective video marketing and includes links to other useful sites (http://lorraine-syratt.suite101.com/how-to-use-video-marketing-as-a-promotional-tool-

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Creator's Corner: How to Make a Video for YouTube: YouTube provides several tools and on-line guides for creating, editing and uploading online videos (http://www.youtube.com/t/creators_corner). [13]

How to Create Videos for YouTube: This site provides useful information on editing software, as well as other tools and tips for creating effective videos (http://www.ideas-for-marketing.com/how-to-create-videos-for-you-tube.php). [14]

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