

A simple guide to video planning and the production process.

There are three distinct phases of the process. It may be very helpful to have a producer/ video consultant to coordinate the planning, people and process. This person is the project lead and liaison contact between the client and the production company. Working for the client, this individual makes production decisions and keeps the team on schedule to maximize the time to expenditures. This individual could be an independent consultant or a staff member from the production company.

1. *Pre production (Planning and strategy)*

The planning is the key to a successful cost-effective project. This phase and final editing are the most time consuming. The more clarification a client can contribute about their vision of the project or what their goals are, the easier it is to receive a spot-on production quote so everyone is on the same page. An outline or brief can set the stage for a clear concise description of project purpose and plan implementation. For example: Who's writing the script? Where's the location or will there be multiple? Do you need voice or video talent or animation? Do you want screen or graphic effects, a teleprompter? Will there be a music track or copyright purchases required? The brief includes purpose of the video, demographic audience, how it will be used etc. The best way to begin is by going through an assessment, which is really a questionnaire to identify several important factors about the project. (Questionnaire provided separately)

2. *Production (video shoot)*

After everything is planned with a detailed brief and a script and/or storyboard is written, the actual video shoot can be a snap, lasting a few hours or an entire day depending upon how much footage is necessary to meet the project plan and how many "takes" to get the right shots. Keep in mind, the set up can take an hour or more depending upon the location, lighting etc. The plan will determine how many cameras, crew members, location, what type of equipment, staging and time schedule will necessary for production. In some cases, there could be potential to capture additional B-roll footage that could be used for future video projects.

3. *Post Production (editing footage, sound, visual effects)*

This final stage of editing includes footage logging, graphic selections, audio narratives and music is cut together to create a rough first draft. It always seems to take a bit longer than you think, especially, if there wasn't a clear plan or scope with a timeline. Having a good editor can be the difference between a finished project that is average or great. It comes down to the details, fast cuts, sound bites, images and effects that draws in the viewer, holds their attention or motivates them to act now. Once the rough cut is approved, the finishing touches are completed color corrections, title bars, text effects and transitions. The editing timeline is based on the length and simplicity or the complexity of the finished video.