

Technical Aspects of Shooting Videos

There is more involved in shooting, editing and posting videos than we sometimes anticipate going in, and the technological aspects can be frustrating the first couple of times through. Here are some things to consider and plan for.

Equipment:

- 1) Video camera – can be as simple as your smartphone. If you want to invest in a high quality, moderately priced video camera, I use a Canon Vixia HF R40.
- 2) Tripod – invest in something that isn't too flimsy and will last.
- 3) Lighting stands, or lamps on tables (lighting for your face should be a little above eye level)

Steps:

1. Script video
2. Set up camera, lights (optional), backdrop. Do a google search for “3 point lighting” to understand how it works. Lots of diffuse (versus direct) light is best, ideally from the same type of source, not mixed (incandescent is best, but also CFL's, sunlight, etc.). I use simple metal work lamps, and clip several sheets of wax paper over them – note, this is NOT safe – a definite fire hazard, and I turn off lights between takes. I have also used tissue paper, and strawberry cloth is good, if you can find that. There are professional lights made just for video, but you don't need those unless you really want to invest. I have one, telescoping light stand (from a photography store), and I rigged together setups for the other lamps so they are a little above eye level.
3. Test your lighting before you shoot your video. I at least turn the screen to face me, but it's best to shoot a few seconds of you standing where you want to be and then pop it into your computer. You want your face to be well lit, without a lot of shadows. And you want to stand out against the background. If you're savvy, play with the white balance settings on your camera.
4. Check your Settings:
 - my camera has a setting for portraits – where it focuses on me more than the background. The icon for the setting is a silhouette of a head.
 - Resolution – I shoot in high resolution for my business videos so they can be used anywhere and look as good as possible. This allows flexibility to repurpose your videos down the line.
5. Practice speaking
6. Shoot video
7. Load video to computer (I actually save my videos on two, separate external hard drives and not on my computer. *If you move or rename video files after you begin editing, your editing program (Windows Movie Maker, for me) may not be able to find them next time you go into the program. Try to set up your system so you don't have to make changes later.)

8. Edit video (I use Windows Movie Maker) – trim off beginning and end, and splice together takes, if needed.
9. Save video in the format you want (I choose the option for HD – the options are for different resolutions). This will create an MP4 file, rather than the Movie Maker (editable) file.
10. Upload video to hosting site (Youtube, Vimeo, others)
11. (optional) Embed video into *your* website (Wordpress → insert media)
12. If sending out in an email campaign, write copy that will “sell” them on watching your video.
13. (optional) Get a Screenshot: Play your video on your screen, stop when the image looks presentable. If you use Windows, go to start menu, type in “snip” and Snipping Tool comes up. Select the parts of your image to save as the screenshot. Include screenshot with hyperlink to either your website (blog post) or wherever you want to send them. (also, can set screenshot as “featured image” on wordpress sites so there’s more visual appeal to click)

Additionally, you can post your video directly to Facebook (Plus side – FB wants to host your videos, so they’ll give it more views than posting a link to an outside site. Down side – you don’t get the traffic to your page, so you’ll have to count on your call to action in your video to get people engaged with you and capture their email address)

Phew! You did it! Celebrate!!!