



The Four Phases of Television Production:

1. Preproduction
 - a. Research & Site Surveys
 - b. Scripting
2. Production
 - a. Materials (tape, digital storage, & other expendables)
 - b. Equipment & Rentals
3. Postproduction
 - a. Graphic Design Elements (motion graphics, 3D, backgrounds, logos)
 - b. Narration
 - c. Sound Mixing & Editing
4. Distribution
 - a. Duplication (if project is needed on tape or DVD)
 - b. Transcoding for web, DVD, or other electronic distribution

Things to Consider Before Getting Started:

- Who is your target audience?
- What is your message?
- What is the purpose of your video?
- What visual and graphical elements do you want to show?
- Where does the crew have to travel to get these elements?
- How many minutes should the program last?
- What is the estimated life of your video?
- Who will be the content expert on this project?
- Who will be approving the scripts and edits?
- What is the deadline? What factors will affect your deadline?
- How much do you have budgeted for your video?
- Can the video elements be repurposed, such as for DVD distribution?

How Much Does a Video Cost?

A typical video production can cost anywhere from one thousand to five thousand dollars per finished minute, and prices vary widely from project to project, as the range shows. Variables in a production can include the cost of professional on-camera talent, complexity of the graphics and animations, number of location shooting setups, final run-time, and other elements listed under Production and Post-Production.



We shoot all of our footage in High-Definition. It is important to consider whether a secondary use of the footage might come up at a later point, which is why we shoot Hi-Def – many clients initiate a project for use on the web, and later on decide that they want to use the same footage in television productions, or trade show presentations. By acquiring footage at the highest quality, we ensure that it will be “future-proof”, or usable at any level of production quality.

How Long Does it Take to Produce a Video?

This depends on the run-time and the scope of the production. A simple video shot in a single location, with straightforward lighting and production, is a lot less work than one shot at multiple locations with many setups and lighting changes. You can also limit the amount of time that the process takes by limiting the number of decision-makers on the project. There should be one decision maker. Also make sure that there is a content expert from your company available for all shooting dates (it’s much cheaper to do a second take than to re-shoot after the editing is done). Budget enough pre-production time to make sure that your message is on target. Roughly sixty percent of any video production is in the preproduction stage. It’s better to spend the planning time to get your message right, than to rush into a project with an unrealistic deadline, and be disappointed with the final result.

The Script Writing Phase:

This phase synthesizes your company’s message, and often any existing written materials, and converts them for the spoken word. It is also important at this phase to begin thinking about the on-camera talent you might be using. Always use someone who is comfortable speaking to the public, and can convey this on video. Nothing can short-circuit a message worse than a spokesperson that looks nervous on camera. Many productions do not use on-camera talent, and a voice-over and music provide the necessary information.

There are often several drafts of a script written before it is considered tight enough to be the final, or shooting script.

It is also important to consider the B-roll, or supplemental shots, which are used to cut away from the spokesperson, or provide visual support for the voice-over. Nothing is as deadly as a three or four minute production that is all talking head (one person in front of the camera). Plan on having footage shot that can be used to cut away from the spokesperson (if there is one), and enhance the content of the script by supplying supporting shots.

The Production Phase:

This includes the shooting as well as the beginning phases of Graphic Design, and the production of any elements that will be needed for the edit. At this point, all materials which will be used in the production, such as logos in electronic form, still photographs, existing footage, music beds, and on-camera talent, should be ready to go.



Just Push Play

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All decisions as to shooting locations should have been made, and the shot list should be ready to go by this phase. A shooting schedule will be prepared from the shooting script, so that footage can be acquired in the most effective way. Many productions are shot “out of order”.

The Post-Production Phase:

The footage is digitized to the editing system, and the editing is almost ready to begin. The footage is first logged with notes as to which takes are the best, which not to use, and any other notations pertinent to the editing process. If there is to be a music bed under the video, this is laid into the editing timeline to facilitate the pace of the editing. Music should not be an afterthought.

The edit also allows for the cutting out of mistakes, the assembling of scenes shot out of order, adding of b-roll where necessary, and incorporating any stills, music, animations, or graphics.

Once the editing is done, an approval copy goes to the client, and any changes are decided upon. If the total process has had complete client involvement, from the content expert to the final decision maker (which may be one in the same), there will be only a couple of minor changes.

The Distribution Phase:

If the project has been created in High Definition video, it is at its’ absolute best quality. “Down-rezzing”, or lowering the resolution, is a straightforward matter of deciding what distribution outlets need which resolutions. The web has a need for efficient loading and small file size, so if playback on the web is desired, the file size needs to be small. Web deliverables depend on the website structure, so we work closely with your webmaster. We often deliver web video as Flash files, but can also create distribution media for iPhones, iPads, Android devices, and other portable media hardware. Once the project is finished and distribution has begun, it is a good idea to do an assessment of how the project went, to determine what could have been improved in the process. In this way subsequent projects can be handled more efficiently.

Bourke Media provides this information as a courtesy to our clients and potential clients – we hope that you find it useful.

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