



Digital Culture Network Resources: Producing Video Content

Introduction

This resource provides information and advice on making video content using a smartphone. As well as considerations for generating content, it contains advice on hardware, software and distribution.

Why video?

Video has proven to be more engaging and more memorable than any other medium. Great video can illustrate a story and take the audience on a journey. By producing videos that offer the audience a glimpse behind the scenes of a production or an in-depth review of a museum's artefact, audiences have the chance to see much more of an organisation's personality and what makes them so unique.

Typically videos produced for YouTube have a longer run time than Instagram, Facebook or Twitter. But don't aim to reach a certain run time, quality not quantity is the name of the game here. If a video is perfectly right for its audience it doesn't matter if it's 5, 10 or 25 minutes long.

The absolute focus of your video should always be on the story, answering the questions below internally will help you determine whether it's going to be right for your organisation.

- **Why should my audience watch this video?**
- **What will this video say about our organisation?**
- **Why will people want to see more from us after watching this video?**

Audiences have relatively short concentration spans with video, so you should always look to keep your video moving along as swiftly as possible. Also it helps to start with impact, explain what the video is about, what you will cover and aim to do that within the first 30 seconds.

Long drawn out intros might look impressive but if the audience fails to understand the video's significance to them they will simply move on and in doing so harm your statistics in the eyes of the algorithms.

There are billions of people in the world and millions of niche interests, so don't convince yourself that your voice isn't important, it is!

With your knowledge, passion and incredible access to behind the scenes action, you are in an incredible position to produce engaging content that will most likely be loved and shared.

Essential building blocks for a successful video

A quick glance at YouTube will illustrate this next part perfectly, but the most successful videos on YouTube are videos that don't sell but inspire and inform. It is worth thinking of video like the scene in Jerry Maguire where Jerry says: "Help me, help you."

- What is the purpose of your video? Are you trying to educate an audience? Are you trying to raise awareness of your subject?
- What makes your idea or point-of-view unique?
- Do you have at least some expertise on your subject matter? Why should people watch your video and value your opinions?
- Is your video best suited to be factual, regular entertainment show or a feature case-study piece? How are you planning to structure it? Will it be just one "personality" on their own or will you be able to bring in guests, and if so, can this be done on a regular basis?

- Is there an appetite for putting in the effort? No one ever made it to the top on their first, second or third video it takes time, a lot of time! Everyone starts with zero views and you and your team need to be prepared for the long haul.
- Have you got the right equipment for the kind of videos you want to make?

Types of videos

The types of videos that you can make depends a lot on your time and resources.

Here's a guide to the most popular videos and what goes into making them.

Type	Description	Example
Solo Piece to Camera Commentary Reviews How To's Inspirational	Only got a camera and mic? Prepared to talk to yourself for hours and edit the best bits? Well in that case these types of content are a great way of educating, informing and inspiring your audience when all you have is yourself.	Casey Neistat Peter Mckinnon Sunny Lenarduzzi

Interview style Chat show Commentary How To's Inspirational	Got friends and an extra mic? A conversation is probably one of the easiest things to film if you have at least one camera and two mics. It's also great to get to know the subject and uncover aspects from someone else's perspective.	Objectivity Numberphile
Documentary Style	Lots of time and equipment with a story that needs telling? Well although these types of videos are hard to pull off and are often less engaging, they do have the power to stick around and be entertaining for many years to come.	Real Stories RT Documentary

The equipment

We have got all this way and only now are we covering equipment! That's because the greatest camera in the world doesn't equate to the greatest video in the world. Story will always be what people come for and importantly stick around for... though we still need to record the image using something!

Hardware

Your mobile phone is likely to be a good solution, especially now most of us have a smart phone capable of recording great images. Whether

it's an iPhone or Android most will have the ability to record pleasing video.

Keep it simple at first. Film during the day in a well-lit room with no background noise and you should get nice images.

Better still face the window (face into the light, not away from it) and as long as you are not in direct sunlight you'll get an even exposure that won't overwhelm your phone's camera. If you can buy a plug-in directional mic this will improve your audio quality by reducing unwanted background noise.

Editing

There are many apps out there to choose from, but the one we have found that works well on both Android and iPhone is InShot. It is free to download and try, if you want to remove the watermark in the bottom of the frame, it's less than £3 to buy the licensed version.

Using InShot (and most other apps) you can select clips from your camera roll, import them to the app and trim them down accordingly. You can raise or lower the audio level, add titles and graphics and even color grade the footage. But remember less is more!

From there you can export to your chosen social media channel of choice, all from your mobile device.

Video creation checklist

1. Write Script/Scriptment
2. Plan your shots
3. Make sure there's plenty of light
4. Make sure you have good clean audio
5. Do several clips, everyone makes mistakes
6. Turn your personality up to 110% audiences love enthusiasm
7. When finished choose your clips from your phone's camera roll.

8. Add them to the InShot timeline and trim them down and re-order them.
9. Adjust audio and if needed the brightness/colour before adding titles.
10. Export and upload to your chosen social media account.

Distribution

You've spent a long time on your project and it's easy at this stage to forget about the importance of thumbnails, descriptions, tags and titles.

Using a website like Canva you can produce free great looking thumbnails that will have clarity and brightness, be the perfect size and aspect ratio, and look appealing to your audience.

Couple this with a catchy title, and a lengthy description full of keywords, and you are on your way to being discovered on YouTube. Hashtags and Tags are also important as it helps the server locate the answers to audience queries and serve up your video. Therefore, it's key to make sure you don't become too generic with your Tags and actually home in on what your particular niche audience is searching for.

VidIQ and TubeBuddy are great for helping you to identify areas in your description, tags and title that could do with being improved.

Where next?

For equipment, here is a list of equipment that adds quality to your videos, although there are plenty more to choose from on the internet. We've provided Amazon links, though of course, these are widely available from a variety of retailers.

1. Mic for Android – [Amazon UK Link](#)
2. Mic for iPhone – [Amazon UK Link](#)
3. Cage for supporting phone – [Amazon UK Link](#)

4.Light – [Amazon UK Link](#)

And if you need more support, check out our very own video here on how to produce videos using a mobile phone.

Digital Culture Network video: How to make videos on your smart phone

Further Support:

The Digital Culture Network is here to support you and your organisation. If you work for an arts and cultural organisation which is eligible for Arts Council England funding, and need help or would like to chat with us about any of the advice we have covered above, please get in touch by emailing digitalnetwork@artscouncil.org.uk with some background about you, your location and the challenges you're facing, and we will connect you with one of our nine Tech Champions for 1-2-1 support.

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