

Creating a brief for the production company

Your first step is to put together a brief. This need only to be one or two pages, but it should indicate **the messages you want to communicate, the target audience**, plus any time, budgetary or other constraints. The cost for a video production really is the proverbial 'how long is a piece of string'.

Depending on content a three minute programme could be more expensive than a 30 minute programme. Giving at least budget parameters may be very useful.

The production company will then provide an estimate of costs and a film 'treatment' which is an outline of how they intend to interpret your brief.

Research. The producer / scriptwriter will need to learn to understand your company and the purpose of the intended video programme which could involve access to information that only your company can supply. It is also useful to be able to meet members of your company who have knowledge of specific information – processes etc. Visits to relevant locations and facilities will have to be organised.

The Script

The next stage is to develop the script. Furnished with the information from the client, the scriptwriter will come up with an outline. The script will describe all the visual shots as well as the commentary

Scripts should be read carefully and any changes made at this stage. Another consideration is whether to use commentary, a live presenter or whatever.

Actors, don't be afraid if it is suggested that an actor plays a key role, remember that your staff are not trained actors. Although actors don't come cheap they can give the production the quality of performance you will want.

The production schedule At this stage it is usually advisable to hold a meeting to discuss the shooting schedule. Rarely is a programme shot in synchronistic order. This meeting should decide when and where shooting will take place.

The Commissioner's Involvement

As the commissioner you should discuss the level of involvement you would like to have with the production

You should arrange for the production company to have access to relevant parts of your site when necessary and what participating staff members can do to make the production run smoothly. It is also essential to make all members of staff aware of what is going on. It can be disconcerting for staff when a film crew turns up unannounced. It also helps staff morale

Your Involvement is also required when it would be practical to stay with the crew during filming and to speak out if there is anything being shot that isn't right. If a particular piece of dialogue or shot is going to be factually inaccurate or unacceptable and can be corrected and re-shot there and then. If it is impossible for you to be there, a deputy with intense knowledge and duly briefed, should be deployed.

Shooting

The producer will put together a schedule which will detail all the shooting times, places and shots required as well as any creative elements the script dictates. It is the responsibility of the commissioner to arrange any necessary people or resources from his/her company that the producer requires. During filming quiet may sometimes be required to record a soundtrack.

Shooting takes up only a short part of the total time during the programme making process but may take longer if special weather conditions or a lot of locations are required.

Rushes. In more complex productions it may be advisable to view the rushes (raw camera footage) this is to help in deciding which 'takes' are best and to check if there are any mistakes to be rectified. As we mention under the heading 'The commissioner's involvement' it will depend on the level of involvement you want to contribute.

Editing

The editor will create a pilot edit of your programme (usually known as an off line edit), probably using the producer as the commentary voice, which you will be invited to view. Background music will also be added now, together with any sound effects. Any out-sourced computer graphics which are to be inserted will be indicated where appropriate.

Any alterations may be made at this stage and it may need re-edited more than once.

Once everyone is happy with the off line version, the chosen commentator will then record the script, which is used to create the final on line edit. Any commissioned visual graphics will also be added. It is then that the final programme is created.

And finally...

The previous sections should give you a good overview of the process involved. Video production is something you should not be afraid of, you should embrace it and thoroughly enjoy the video making process, if you do you will end up with a video programme to be proud of and one which fulfils all of it's objectives to the full.

Have a clear understanding of what you want to achieve and any good producer will know how to achieve it.

Any questions you may have please contact us