**Don’t Forget Your Bathing Suit: A Crash Course in Delivering Engaging Photos and Videos**

**Introduction**

Drone Crash Video

We’re always learning and we don’t know everything, but hopefully you’ll learn some cool new items about video and photography. And hopefully we can have an engaging, fun discussion about it.

Evolution of The Loop as an example

**Getting to Know Audience**

What roles do we have in the audience today? Videographers, managers, etc.

Take a minute to jot down some of the challenges your agency faces when it comes to photo/video responsibilities, talk about it to folks around you. Share with the group.

**Prep**

As soon as you start using video, you will be in high demand. Videos are a lot of work, and it’s important to only put the time and effort into a project if the story will be both useful and visually compelling. Make sure to ask some basic questions.

* What are the end goals of the video?
  + Need to present complex information in an accurate way?
  + Need to market a new service?
  + Need to explain a solution?
* Does this present a visual story?
  + Are there visual anchors that can be written to?
* What type of video?
  + Animation, live-action, multi-media
  + Who can tell this story the best?
* Do you have a script?
  + Gather up the main points
  + Make sure to read it outloud
* Importance of writing scripts/shot-listing – Provide examples

Scripting can seem daunting to offices who haven’t utilized video. My recommendation is to keep the scripting simple for folks.

If the video is interview based, come up with some key points that need to be highlighted (introduce the project, what obstacles occurred, how were they overcome, how did it benefit the community.)

If the video is more VO heavy, utilize a 2 column VO script. One side of that showcases the “voiceover” – or narration – and the other side being the visuals. If you can get in early, try to write the voiceover to the compelling visuals. Example, the Tesla pulling out of the driveway and driving itself to work. Visualizes the information, helps for the viewer to have a picture.

Once these have been written, the video team can prepare a shotlist of visuals needed and begin to start work. Shotlist can be simple or as detailed as needed. Show examples of both.

Most video requests come in from various places across the department, but if in need of stories (such as The Loop): we typically scour social media, press releases and talk to PIOs. Make sure to get your district PIOs involved, they may be able to provide more local insight. Example: Bridge upcycling

* Visual anchors – write to them (visuals are gold)
* Use Bridge Upcycling example – These guys are talking about these bridges that utilized recycled ODOT Bridge beams. Go out to the site, not only film the bridges, but film the guys out on the bridges. Get some soundbites from them while they’re there. Also show the before pictures, when talking about it.

**Equipment Prep**

* Bring some type of camera (DSLR, phone, etc)
* BATTERIES AND MEMORY CARDS
* Two ways to record audio if you can. One will inevitably fail and you need a backup.

Top 3 Desert Island accessories

1. Rode Wireless Go II Kit – Can use on a phone but will need adapter cables
   1. Show that this doesn’t require cables even, can directly put on clothes
      1. Show examples for the Loop
   2. Perfect for quick interviews
   3. iPhone Alternative: [Bluetooth Lavs](https://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/product/1578068-REG/movo_photo_edge_di_duo_2_1_wireless_mics_with.html) -
2. Monopod
   1. Gimbals are great but can limit your flexibility and you can miss the shot
   2. Selfie stick for phones
3. Small light panel

Honorable Mentions:

• Air Blower tool for sensor spots, dust, etc

• Variable ND Filters

* The gear isn’t the most important thing but it enables you to get creative

**Filming Techniques**

* Importance of Clean Audio

Clean audio is the most important thing when it comes to making videos. People are very forgiving when it comes to an out of focus shot, but you immediately lose your audience if the audio isn’t up to par.

* + Show an example of this
    - Video shot on high end DSLR but bad audio
    - Video shot on a phone but great audio
  + Show a photo of an interview shoot set up, try to get the shotgun mic as close as possible without being in the shot. Can even do two audio sources and use one as a redundant mic (Opp. Corridor Example)
  + If you don’t have a mic, use a second iPhone and use that as a microphone. Sync up the audio in post. (show example)
  + Don’t forget your clap to sync! – Use video from BYCTWD
* Aerial shots

For what we do in transportation, the capability of getting aerial shots have significantly improved the stories we can tell at ODOT. Projects can be massive in scale and the best way to show them is through aerial photo and video. Would highly recommend looking into drone training and resources. ODOT even offers this.

* + How they bring something together, scale
  + Encourage to pursue getting a Pt. 107 license and investing in a drone (Skydio)
    - [Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) eLearning Courses | Ohio Department of Transportation](https://www.transportation.ohio.gov/programs/ltap/elearning/uas)
* Artful Cinematography/Photography is a good thing!

*Show some creative shots here (Snowpacalypse)* What we do is often compared to the news, we just need to get the information out as fast as possible and it’s easy for quality to get overlooked. Just because something needs to get out quickly, doesn’t mean that it *has* to look bad. Doing things in an artful, creative way make a video even more visually compelling and descriptive/factual.

When we take time and put something together in an artful way, it 100% increases the longevity and recyclability of the end product. The videos and photos can be repurposed again and again. Examples of DDI Who Knew (520K Tiktok views)and the In the Blink of a Fly (143K Tiktok views) video, used in the Loop and then repurposed for social media channels like Tiktok. We have to be churning out so much content and it is extremely valuable to have material you can share more than once.

Reasons for artful cinematography/photography

1. More recyclable
2. Looks better (more eye catchy)
3. Communicate the message more effectively

* Shoot with the edit in mind
  + Another reason that it’s helpful to have a shotlist.
  + Get the broll that you know is mentioned in the script. Don’t waste your time with broll that isn’t needed.
  + In Camera Transitions
* Safety Tips
  + Watch each other’s backs
  + Don’t get sucked into the camera

**Editing Techniques**

This is where it comes together. You can shoot all you want, but you don’t have anything if it’s not edited. Be prepared to spend a lot of time in editing. If you spend a full day shooting, prepare for 3-5 days worth of editing.

**Adobe Rush**

This is a very powerful free editing app that can be used on mobile or desktop. Allows you to quickly turn around videos and still have lots of control over it. Free version lacks some features, but overall is fantastic for an easy editing option that allows you to keep crank out videos. Our PIOs use it for social media videos.

**Adobe Premiere**

The main editor that we rely on. Can be overwhelming at first, but is a powerful tool for editing videos.

* Templates and Mogrts

We create a lot of similar videos, one example being The Loop each week. One way we can get those created so quickly is by using Templates.

Motion graphic templates can be created in After Effects and then utilized for anything from transitions to lowerthirds. (show example)

Creating a folder with all of the commonly used video assets is extremely important. We use a Loop Assets folder with everything needed for each week’s show.

* Auto-transcribing/Captions

Text panel will autotranscribe sequences. This is HUGE. Not only can you easily create captions and export .SRT files for Youtube and Facebook, but you can use the transcriptions to your advantages when editing a video. When working on an interview based video, I will typically transcribe my raw interviews and then build a script from the transcriptions. It’s also keyword searchable. ( “Bingo” example)

* Syncing Sound

Let Premiere sync up your sound for you. You can go in and directly sync audio.

**Delivery**

* Network Drive

We used to have massive RAID storage backups, and then a few years ago we started working with IT to create a large video network drive. This allows us to easily share video assets amongst our entire staff around the state. We actively created broll packages that PIOs can easily access and use for their video projects. Works very well when trying to transfer video files around.

* Vimeo - [Ohio DOT (vimeo.com)](https://vimeo.com/ohiotransportation)

We utilize Vimeo both internally and externally, but use primarily for sharing video externally.

* + Vimeo Showcases
    - This is a common way we package interviews and broll for news outlets when we have press releases. Our press secretary will attach a link along with the press release and media can download for their use.
  + Vimeo Review page
    - This is a common use for internal and external purposes. When reviewing videos, the video can be sent to customers who can then leave time-coded notes for revisions when watching videos. This has been *immensely* helpful in speeding up workflow.
  + One link for everything.
    - Vimeo allows you to replace the video when you have a new version. Link stays the same. Rather than deleting and re-uploading like Youtube.
  + Allows direct downloads
    - All Vimeo videos can be downloaded when that feature is turned on. Very helpful when sending videos around.
* Youtube
  + We have an external channel and internal channel for training materials.
  + External - [(3) Ohio Department of Transportation - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfs4Y-HU3bvMOYPVNu9rvAw)
  + Internal - [(5) TranscriptTV - Ohio DOT - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC48lVQnj_J4PlKEv8zlgc3g)
* Training

During the pandemic, I created some tutorial videos to help out some of our PIOs in learning video best practices. Trubee Tutorials- [(1) Trubee Tutorials - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxpoBQq_MZGs7dZopi6AG7FkECOhsbUol)

**Notes to End**

* “Shoot it today, it won’t be the same the next time you come back”
* Don’t be afraid to get scrappy. Technology has allowed us to do some amazing things that used to take large video crews. We can do so much more now with 1-2 person “one-man-bands” Don’t be afraid to push the limit, just stay safe out there.
* Aesthetics DO matter
  + Taking time with something and doing it in an artful way will make something have a longer life
  + Diverging Diamond Interchange example
* Your audience doesn’t ALWAYs want the shortest video possible
* Don’t neglect to make nice thumbnails! Can make them yourself or have a graphic designer make them

**Other Resources**

* Premiere book, tutorials
* Stock music: Epidemic Sound
* Stock footage and graphics: Storyblocks, Adobe Stock – lots of free options if you have CC