

BY NESTOR BRAVO

7 STEPS

TO START CREATING
HIGH QUALITY
VIDEOS

A portrait of Nestor Bravo, a man with short brown hair and a light beard, wearing a blue denim shirt, smiling slightly. The background is dark.

NESTOR BRAVO

Nestor Bravo is an active media personality who is also an actor, TV host and recognized voice in the Venezuelan entertainment industry. Before relocating to the United State in 2011, Bravo was a co-host of the game show “Todo por Venezuela” and “Gente Nueva”, a teen’s talent show meant to discover young talent. He also played lead roles in soap operas such as “Libres Come El Viento” and “Nadie Me Dira Como Quererte”.

Born out of the passion he has for cinematography and directing, Nestor Bravo proceeded to enroll for extended studies in acting, voice, theatre and production in reputable industry workshops across the world, after years of being a camera figure; he specifically had specialized trainings in Spain and the United States.

Once he relocated to the United States, he began work as an audiovisual producer. He served as anchor to the popular and highly renowned “Buenos Dias DC”, Spanish morning news and talk show that aired on network Univision in the metropolis of Washington D.C. Currently, Bravo is a director and video producer with Entercom (former CBS Radio).



NESTOR BRAVO

Still very much in tune with his passion for cinematography, photography and the elements of visual story-telling, Nestor Bravo has refused to let his fame overshadow his passion. He is the CEO of Bravo Films & Media; a Digital Media Agency that specializes in producing commercial and corporate videos for businesses and individuals.

Bravo is an award-winning director who has won two Capital Emmy awards for “Silvana Quiroz Presenta”, a show which airs on Telemundo 44 in Washington DC.

To know more about Nestor Bravo; his vision and achievements in the cinematography world,

visit

<http://bravofilms.net/nestor-bravo/>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

INTRODUCTION

5 **PAG** CHAPTER 1

DETERMINE THE TYPE OF VIDEO YOU WANT AND WHY

7 **PAG** CHAPTER 2

CREATE A CONCEPT FOR YOUR VIDEO

11 **PAG** CHAPTER 3

PLAN YOUR VIDEO SHOOT

17 **PAG** CHAPTER 4

USE A CAMERA THE RIGHT WAY

28 **PAG** CHAPTER 5

SHOOTING THE VIDEO

33 **PAG** CHAPTER 6

LIGHTING

38 **PAG** CHAPTER 7

EDITING, AND EXPORTING

CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

Many people wish to create high-quality videos, especially for their businesses, events, or social media pages. However, creating a high-quality video seems like magic to most since they are not professional video creators. Creating high-quality videos either with your camera or your phone isn't that hard. You just have to know what to do and how to do it. Therefore; we will be discussing the 7 necessary steps to follow to create professional looking videos. Knowing and following these steps will ensure that every time you make a video, it comes out great:

- Choose a video type
- Create a concept for the video
- Plan the video shoot
- Use a camera the right way
- Shooting the video
- Audio & Lighting
- Editing and exporting your video

Let's dive into each of these steps and learn how to create great looking videos now.

1 CHAPTER

DETERMINE THE TYPE OF VIDEO YOU WANT AND WHY —

7 STEPS TO START
CREATING HIGH QUALITY VIDEO



Not too long ago, videos did not use to be as important as they are in the digital world now; pictures seemed to be the only thing people were interested in. But, as the world continues to evolve digitally; the importance of videos to many individuals, brands, and businesses has also increased. In fact, every brand or business now aims to have a video marketing strategy. Videos have now become a central part of everyone's business or personal lives; everyone wants to use great videos to promote their brands and some of us just want to be able to post high-quality videos on Facebook, Instagram and all the other social media sites where we post videos.

Now, the thing is people want videos with high visual qualities, which has made the need to be able to shoot that perfect video important. The higher the quality of your video; the more likes and followers you are likely to reach with your brand. And, that's just what you need to learn.

The first step in creating a video is determining the type of video you want to shoot. The video type you choose helps you decide on other things like the video concept and the shoot itself.

But, How do you determine the type of video to shoot?

The type of video you shoot depends on what you are using the video for. For example, do you want to shoot a video that would promote your business or brand?



IF YES, WHAT ARE THE
TYPES OF VIDEO
YOU CAN CHOOSE
TO SHOOT?



DEMO VIDEO

A video to showcase your product or service and how it works to your target audience.



EVENT VIDEO

Something to show the highlight of an important event to your followers and audience on social media.



BRAND VIDEO

Typically, businesses create this type of video to build awareness of their products or services, and attract their target audience.



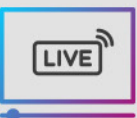
HOW-TO VIDEO

Videos like this are meant to be educational. You want to use it to teach your audience something; something important which could be related to your brand.



ANIMATED VIDEO

Many people use animated videos nowadays because especially of its strong visuals which could be used to promote a brand concept that is hard to grasp.



LIVE VIDEO

This is the most popular of all video types on social media. Audiences are particularly enticed by live videos because it gives them a feeling of belonging to you.



EXPLAINER VIDEO

Popularly used to help audiences better understand a brand and its objectives.

Basically, a video should be used to inform its audience about something; educate them, or give them solutions to a problem. To determine your video type, you must know what you wish to use the video for. For instance; if you are planning to shoot a video that teaches your audience how to use a product you are marketing to them, then; a live video of you using that product would be effective.

What major factors influence the type of video you choose to shoot?

- **The audience: Audience demographic is one major factor that determines video type. The age, gender, education and interests are important things to consider in an audience to know what video type best suits them.**

- **The message your video is meant to pass.**

- **The goals and aims of the video.**

Once you have all these factors in mind, it becomes easier for you to choose the video type that passes the message you wish to pass and which your audience would resonate with. Now, once you have determined the type of video to shoot; you have a better understanding of the next step you want to take which is to create a concept for your video. The type of video you choose plays a major factor in creating a concept for the video. This is because every video type has its own concept. For example; you're not likely to use the same concept of an animated video for a live video because they are two different things and they would both server different purposes.

2 CHAPTER

CREATE A CONCEPT FOR YOUR VIDEO



7 STEPS TO START
CREATING HIGH QUALITY VIDEO

This is a key step in video creation. The concept of a video is its creative bedrock; it is something that shows audiences just how creative you are. Creative development is very important because it requires you to be able to think, define and refine an idea you might have. One thing to note about creating a concept for your video shoot is that it should be original. You have to be able to come up with original concepts and ideas. Studying the web video market and knowing what's in vogue and what people like will strike up an idea in you but this idea doesn't have to be identical to an already existing concept. You should approach your video creation from a creative aspect by;

1

FOCUSING ON THE PROBLEM

You have to be sure on what problem exactly you want your video to address and the solution you have to this problem. Who is the message being addressed to? What do you want them to do or know after watching the video? You have to understand your audience. Do this by noting down these things and also have what is known as audience insights. Once you know your audience and the problem you wish to solve for them, creating a video plan becomes easier. This basically means giving your video a purpose which is meant to serve the interest of your target audience. Your content has to fit the needs of whoever you are addressing.

2

CRITICALLY THINKING ABOUT CREATIVE IDEAS

After noting down the things you wish to address in your video, use the notes to try to come up with different creative ideas for the video. Take at least 30-45 minutes of your time out to brainstorm creative concepts for your video. Whatever idea you are able to come up with doesn't have to be full-fledged; it just has to be something that encompasses what you have written down in your brief; your aim, the message, and your audience.

For example; using a metaphor that compares the service you are offering to something spectacular like a travel to the moon.

Brainstorming rather than just trying to think up an idea is more effective because it gives you the leverage to come up with more than just one creative idea that is all distinct from each other. Even studies have revealed that brainstorming on an issue may help come up with as many solutions as possible. Cross-pollinate your mind and let it search without restrictions. Find inspiration from as many angles as possible and ensure you note it all down.

3 **REVIEWING THE CREATIVE IDEAS**

After brainstorming and coming up with different ideas, it's time to review the ideas you came up with and see which one is best suited for the purpose you are trying to achieve. Try to discuss your ideas with someone critically and realistically. Know which of the ideas are practical and achievable. Which one goes more with what you are trying to achieve? Which one addresses the problem and presents a better solution? Which of the solutions or ideas will appeal more to your audience? Which one do you think would resonate more with your target demographics?

4 **PICKING THE FINAL IDEA**

Out of all the ideas you brainstormed and came up with, you can only choose one as the concept for your video. So, how do you know which one to choose? Choosing a final idea for your video concept might seem like a hard thing to do but it's actually pretty easy.

You have all four ideas and they all look really good to use. But, which of these ideas does your gut go with more? You don't need to over think things in this stage; you only need to pick one of the ideas which you feel more passionate and attached to.

It's not ideal to want to pick the perfect of all your ideas as this will only complicate the whole process all over again. As long as all of the ideas are good, you only have to choose one and see as it metamorphoses into a great creative concept for your video shoot.

Once you have decided on a concept for your video, the next thing to do is to plan and prepare for the shoot.



3 CHAPTER

PLAN YOUR VIDEO SHOOT

7 STEPS TO START
CREATING HIGH QUALITY VIDEO

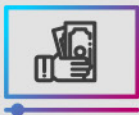


Going out for a shoot without planning the shoot beforehand is the most ideal way to practically waste money, resources and time. Before beginning shooting, it is cost-effective to do proper planning and preparation, make the shooting decisions and all necessary things at home by yourself, or with a crew rather than going out to make the decisions during the shoot itself.

— What are the things to plan before a shoot?

- The budget for your shoot.
- Purpose and Equipment needs.
 - Location of the shoot.
 - Time of the shoot.
- The ideal video length.
 - Make a shot list.
 - Create a storyboard.
- Create a shooting schedule.

THE BUDGET FOR YOUR SHOOT



The budget is a very important part of your video shoot. You should have a budget defined for your production so you don't end up wasting more than is necessary for the shoot. Without a budget, it would be impossible for you to manage your production and expectation. Having a budget helps you decide what is realistic and what is not in the concept you have for your video shoot. It gives you an overview of what you can do and what you should cut down.

PURPOSE AND EQUIPMENT NEEDS



Like earlier said, your shoot has to have a purpose and an audience this purpose is aimed at. The audience and why you are shooting is key to planning your shoot. If you are planning to shoot a promotional video to promote your business or a product, the plan for your video shoot should revolve around showcasing the unique and distinctive assets of your organization or the product. If your video concept is meant to persuade your audience to a product or a brand, plan on a shoot that will highlight your intention. You should shoot a video that shows them why that product is important to them or what it would do for them.

The purpose of your video also helps you determine what kind of equipment you would need for your shoot. Is the video one that requires a dolly to capture smooth-moving shots? Or a one-of-a-kind action video that needs multiple cameras to shoot from various angles? Your audience also influences what you plan for your shoot. For example, shooting for a young audience requires your camera movements less fluid and quicker, with moving angles, as opposed to a video shoot meant for the elderly. Your equipment needs are also determined by the short list you draft up. Once you have drafted a list of the equipment you would be using for your video production, ensure you check out what you already have in place and what you do not.

LOCATION OF THE SHOOT



Another important thing to prepare before your shoot is the location. Are you shooting in a studio or do you have a location in mind? This decision is influenced by your budget. A studio will already have everything you need for your shoot but; if you aren't using a studio, scout for locations that are ideal for your shoot.



Ensure it fits your purpose and needs both physically and aesthetically. Also, assess the location to know if there would be any problem during your shoot. Is the power availability good for your cameras, light and everything else? These are important things you must consider about the location.

TIME OF THE SHOOT

If you are planning a shoot, the time is something important which you must note. Are you shooting outdoors? If yes, is the weather ideal for your shoot? Is there noise in the location you chose? Will you be able to shoot with that noise? Outdoor shoots should be planned based on the type of lighting you need as well. If it is an indoor shoot, will you have enough sunshine coming in through the windows for your shoot? These are all factors that determine the time of your shoot. For instance, if you are planning to shoot at an actual office; then the time of your shoot would have to be after work hours so the shoot does not interfere with the the regular operations of the client's business.

THE IDEAL VIDEO LENGTH

Your video length is also an important thing to plan for a shoot. Ideally, a video length is determined by the message the video is meant to pass. Some videos are meant to be short and sweet while some others like a how-to video need to be longer so it can fully pass across the message you want it to. However, no matter the length of your video; you should be able to hold your viewer's attention within the first 3 seconds of your video.

Ideally, promotional or marketing video should not be more than 2 minutes, while demo videos can be longer than 3 minutes and some long-form content and still be engaging up to 30 minutes, but it always depends on the type of content you're delivering and the audience that is consuming that content.

According to studies, a 2 minutes video will hold audience attention as much as a 60-seconds video. You only need to let your audience grasp the basic message of your video in the first 3 seconds of your video. Studies reveal that most viewers will click away from your video if you do not get to the point after the first 3 seconds because that's how long you can hold their attention. The first 3 seconds are meant to grab audience attention by letting them know your brand or product and what you are addressing.

MAKE A SHOT LIST



While you can refer to a storyboard as the scene-by-scene breakdown of your production; a shot list is a shot-by-shot breakdown of the scenes in your production. Things that should also be included in your shortlist are camera placements and lighting direction. Drawing out a storyboard and making a shot list before production will help you save a lot of time during the video shoot because you already know what step to take at every interval. A shot list can be easily created in a word document or in an excel sheet at no cost in very short amount of time, but there are also tools that make this task easier, we recommend Shotlister as it has a very intuitive interface and it gives the ability to export and print all the information about the scenes in your shoot in a very well organized way.

CREATE A STORYBOARD



The importance of creating a storyboard before your shoot is inestimable to video marketers. Like your concept, the storyboard is also something you should create before starting your shoot. It is an efficient way by which you can visualize your shoot before you actually start. It gives you the opportunity to visualize how your video would turn out and gives you the avenue to make necessary modifications or adjustments based on whatever insight you acquire from your storyboarding process.

Basically, creating a storyboard for your video has to do with looking at your video concept and verifying how practically possible it is by visualizing the images in your head and writing them down.

CREATE A SHOOTING SCHEDULE



Also referred to as a production schedule, your shooting schedule is basically a document that contains details of your shoot. It helps you with making a judgment call on whether your video shoot is going on as planned and if you are able to manage the time expectation of your production crew. The list of things that should be included in your production schedule includes;

- Location.
- Shots.
- Equipment and tools.
- People or talents needed for the video shoot.
- Contacts of these people.
- Date and time of each and every shoots.

Your shooting schedule is where you can answer all questions and concerns that might arise during production, therefore; it should be regularly updated with all vital information and details.

Planning your shoot is an essential part of production which you must not overlook. How carefully planned your shoot is will always reflect in the quality of your final product.

3 CHAPTER



USE A CAMERA THE RIGHT WAY

7 STEPS TO START
CREATING HIGH QUALITY VIDEO

Do you have a camera to shoot your video? Of course, you do. You probably have an iPhone or an Android phone that takes really good pictures and videos but, do you really know how to use your camera? Or, do you even think it would be a good idea to shoot a marketing video with your iPhone? YES!!!, you don't need to have a high-tech DSLR or camera to shoot high-quality videos; you can use a mobile device like your iPhone or Android Device.

Many people are unaware of how good a video shot with their mobile device could be because they don't usually know how to do it properly. Naturally, cameras are set to snap your pictures and videos in auto mode, which means your camera gets to make all the shooting decisions for you and it might not be what your shoot needs. If you are okay with shooting your videos using your mobile device, you only need to know how to set it to shoot the highest quality video possible. Now, you could also get a good DSLR deal and upgrade your kit but, how do you know the right camera to get and how to use it? We'll get right to that, but first let's talk about how you can ensure you're shooting the best possible quality of video on your phone.



NOW, HOW DO YOU KNOW
THE RIGHT CAMERA
TO GET AND HOW TO USE IT?

How do you shoot a high-quality video with your phone?

There are certain settings you can change on your device to make it shoot high-quality videos. Some of these are;

RESOLUTION

Always use the highest resolution your device comes with. (1080p or 4k preferably)

LIGHTING

Your camera's sensors work best with lots of light, therefore, it's best to shoot where there's plenty of light around. In the next chapter we will dive deeper into how to better light subjects and scenes.

FRAME RATE

All cameras, including the ones in mobile devices have the ability of shooting in different frame rates, choose the one that best suits your needs (24fps for Film, 30fps for TV and 60fps and 120fps for slow motion)

COMPOSITION

Turn on the grid feature on your camera app to frame your subjects while you are shooting, the best reference to use is the rule of the three thirds, trying to frame the most interesting parts of the scene you are shooting close to the union of the lines on the grid of your app. There are apps that can help you create better compositions, some of them even based on specific proportions that might cause specific emotions or reactions on audiences, we recommend Composition Cam.

STABILITY

While the image stability on phones has advanced immensely in the last couple of years, a mobile device tends to shoot more unstable footage due to its size and weight, also how many points of contact are being used to hold the camera/phone are critical to a stable shot but one of the best ways to ensure an improved stability and even addition of certain professional accessories for video creation to your mobile device, its a manual stabilizer. (see reference)

ORIENTATION

How you position your phone when shooting is also essential. Although this depends on how you plan to use the video, it is better to shoot with the phone on its side.

AUDIO

There's nothing great about a video if the audio is of low quality, but you can hardly shoot a video with high quality on your phone because it's designed to be omnidirectional which means they pick up sounds from everywhere around you. However, you can prevent this by using an external microphone with your phone.

Note that sending your video directly over the internet instead of downloading it onto your computer through a cable reduces the quality of your video.



FEATURES TO LOOK OUT FOR WHEN BUYING A CAMERA

Most of the cameras in the market today are capable of shooting high-quality HD videos but there are some certain specifications you are recommended to look for in cameras that will help you shoot brighter and sharper videos. First of all, it is important we define the different types of consumer cameras we can use in video creation and which ones are the most suitable for today's day and age:

DSLR: DIGITAL SINGLE-LENS REFLEX

is basically a camera that produces a digital file, combining the mechanisms of the camera with a digital imaging sensor, instead of a photographic film, which is what the first photo and video cameras used (and many modern ones still do). But around 2004, a new type of camera was invented, one without the reflex component, one that was mirrorless.

MIRRORLESS CAMERAS:

Many digital cameras in the market today are mirrorless and in theory, they can produce better quality video, but many dslr cameras that are not mirrorless are still considered among the best small compact cameras in the industry like the Canon 5d series (MkI, MkII, MkIII and MkIV). Your choosing between a DSLR and a Mirrorless camera will

basically depend on factors like budget, compactness, and taste, but there are some features you should keep an eye open for when buying any camera soon:

4K VIDEO

Apart from cameras that shoot Full HD videos, some DSLR cameras are now being produced with the ability to shoot 4K, 8K and even 12k footage, representing a big step up for video creators all around the world. The 4K footage is 4 times as clear as in Full HD, so having more pixels in the image allows you to have a sharper better looking image when downsized to HD from 4K. The 4K footage also allows you to control your cropping, zooming and spanning without a drop in quality.

SLOW MOTION

All cameras shoot in different formats and frame rates depending on the final destination of the video you are creating is, but true slow motion can only be achieved when shooting in higher frame rates that can be later slowed down in any editing software, so when looking at the must-have features your new camera should have, make sure it can shoot at least 60fps in 1080p. (Some DSLR cameras can shoot up to 240fps in HD720p and 120fps on HD1080p and 60fps in 4K video.

FLIPPING SCREEN

Its amazing how useful a flip screen can be when shooting different angles of a subject or a scene, or even when blogging or shooting on selfie mode. However you may want to use it, a flip screen is one of the hottest functions on most of the latest brands of dslrs in the market. The versatility it offers while shooting is far superior than the old static screen in the back of the camera, you could only see when holding it right in front of your face.

IMAGE STABILIZATION

Many lenses with image stabilization are sold everywhere today, and the results they can get are amazing when shooting video, reducing the shakiness of any handheld footage considerably, but there is a new kid on the block (not so new now) that has taken dslr and mirrorless cameras to new horizons, and that is the in-body stabilization or sensor stabilization which will take the task of reducing shakiness even further. Taking away in many cases, one of the limitations that shooting professional video with light dslr or mirrorless cameras have, which is size and weight, which usually introduces more instability into any shot.

MICROPHONE AND HEADPHONE JACK

Audio is a very important part of video, so important we decided to dedicate an entire chapter of this book to it, and while sometimes you will be able to hire a dedicated audio technician that will ensure the best quality of audio possible, some others you will have to capture video and audio at the same time. The best way to do so, is having an external microphone that you have to plug into the camera through the proper input jacks, monitoring the levels of that audio is also very important, so make sure your next camera can offer you these features before buying it.

FAST LENSES

The speed of a lens depends on how wide its aperture is. The wider the aperture, the more light will pass through the lens and the recording medium. The more light goes in through the lens, the faster the shutter speed. What differentiates fast lenses from the not-so-fast lenses has continued to change over the years but basically speaking, the difference between a fast lens and a not-so-fast lens should be around $f/2.8$.

Practically speaking, a one-sec difference in aperture can have a maximum effect on how fast or slow your shutter is and; how well you can work in low-light condition. With a shutter speed of $1/125$ sec, it would be impossible to hold a 200mm lens by hand, but with $1/250$ sec, it is possible. That one stop can make all the difference in your shot.

Using a camera with a fast lens comes with a lot of advantage which includes; shutter speed for when you handhold your DSLR in low light, more light in the viewfinder, depth-of-field improvement, and sensor size. A fast lens also gives more cinematic and aesthetic look to your image.



USING YOUR DSLR TO SHOOT HIGH- QUALITY VIDEOS

There's a lot to know when shooting with a DSLR. To get full value from your DSLR, you should know how to control the following settings;

SHOOTING MODES

Your shooting mode is the first place to start with when setting up your DSLR. Usually, the shooting modes in a camera are labeled with 'Auto, Av, Tv, P, M' and probably some other ones.

AUTO

Gives your camera control over everything that controls exposure like the shutter speed and aperture.

AV (APERTURE PRIORITY)

Gives you control over the aperture while your camera controls the shutter speed. The aperture influences the depth of field and is measured in 'f-stops'. With a wide aperture, you get plenty amount of light entering your camera while with a smaller aperture, the amount of light reduces.

TV/S (SHUTTER PRIORITY)

Gives your camera control over the aperture while you set the shutter speed. Your shutter speed is the amount of time your shutter remains open when taking a shot. The longer your shutter stays open, the more light enters through your aperture.

P (PROGRAM):

In this mode, when you set either the aperture or shutter speed; your camera automatically adjusts the other one accordingly.

M (MANUAL)

This shooting mode gives you full authority over both the aperture and shutter speed.

Note: Always try to use manual mode for video shooting, as it is the only way to have full control over your image and not let the camera make any decision for you; instead of changing your shooting mode, you should learn how to use all the pro features in your camera.



The ISO, (which isn't an abbreviation, by the way) measures the sensitivity of your camera sensor to light. Represented numerically, the ISO starts from ISO 100 (Low sensitivity to light) to ISO 6400 (High sensitivity). It controls the amount of light needed by the sensors to get the desired exposure. Low ISO numbers like 100 or 200 are used when there's enough light to get the correct exposure while you use high ISO numbers like 3200 when shooting in a place without enough light. It's important to know that while newer cameras usually offer higher ISO numbers and perform better under low light conditions, some of them will add high amounts of noise the more you increase the ISO value, so always be mindful of the highest ISO value your camera can perform without introducing too much noise into the image.

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

The aperture, ISO, and shutter speed are all components of the exposure triangle. These three influence the amount of light that enters the camera or the amount of light needed by a camera to get a correct exposure. Therefore, a change in any of them will affect the others. This principle works with a lot more flexibility when working with photography,

but when it comes to video there is a rule called the 180 degree rule, created to add the right amount of motion blur to digital video. It basically states that the shutter speed should always be twice as the frame rate, meaning that if you are shooting 24fps, in theory your shutter speed should be twice as that so 1/48, or in some cases 1/50; for 30fps, a shutter speed of 1/60 and so on. Keep in mind that the higher your shutter speed the more light you will need in your scene to have a good exposure in your image. So to finalize on the exposure triangle, the ISO and the aperture of your lens are the most effective way to control exposure when doing digital video.

Note: As some would say, rules are meant to be broken, and in the case of the 180 degree rule that is not far from the truth, as some people tend to play with other shutter speed to add certain effects or emotions to their shots.

■ FOCUS MODES

One of the most critic aspects of digital video is focus, an out of focus shot is pretty much useless when not having a back up, specially when working with high speed lenses and when more depth of field is present. When using compatible lenses with your digital camera, some cameras will have an auto focus feature that can do wonders for video. (some brands like sony and canon perform better in auto focus mode). Having an external monitor can also help see more detail and nailing focus more easily. There is also a function a most cameras now a day called focus peaking or just peaking which creates a border around subjects to help you better determine the correct focus on any subject regardless of its distance to the camera.



USE AN EXTERNAL MICROPHONE WITH YOUR CAMERA

All cameras have an internal microphone that will capture decent ambient audio for reference, but if you're shooting a video and will need to record high quality audio from that shot scene, your best bet is to attach an external microphone to your camera like a shotgun mic, a lapel mic or even a handheld one, in fact professional productions always use a separate sound person with what's called a "Boom Mic" which is a long over head pole with a big high quality condenser microphone attached to it, this configuration is the best way to go since the "Boom Man/Woman" is able to mix all audio scenes as they are recorded for a better, high quality audio that will then be synced with the ambient audio recorded by the camera. Which type of audio configuration to use will be determined by many factors, including distance from the subject to the camera, location (outdoor/indoor) and amount of ambient noise. Most people can bear to see a video with average video quality with good audio, while on the other hand, you can have the most beautiful crisp, 8k video clip, but if the audio sucks, the video will suck!

5 CHAPTER

SHOOTING THE VIDEO



7 STEPS TO START
CREATING HIGH QUALITY VIDEO

So you've already decided what type of video you will shoot, you created a concept for it and planned the shooting day in advance, so now its time to shoot it, but there are many ways of shooting a video, it all depends on the type of video you will shoot and the concept you have created, but just grabbing a camera with your bear hands and hitting the record button will not necessarily be the best course of action to shoot a good "Professional Looking Video". Keep these tips in mind and your results will improve considerably:

SHOOTING STABLE FOOTAGE

Shooting stable footage with a DSLR is pretty easy when you have fancy gear like a tripod, a slider, a dolly or even a gimbal or stabilizer, but when starting off, you don't necessarily have the means to acquire these type of tools. However, there are certain things you can do to ensure you get a smooth and silky footage every time you take your camera out for video:

HOLDING YOUR CAMERA PROPERLY

While some modern dslr and mirrorless cameras have amazing internal stabilization in the camera and in the lens, there are still many that produce amazing images but lack that internal function, so the way you hold your camera will play a major role in the stability of your shot, and depending on the weight and size of your DSLR, holding it properly will greatly increase the stability of anything you want shoot. Most people will hold a camera in the air with two hands, resulting in a shaky shot, which if not intentionally done, can be off putting and cause the wrong emotion or reaction on your audience.

So when holding a camera with both your hands, it is recommended to try to add more points of contact between you and your camera, like sticking your elbows to your ribs on both sides, this increase the stability of your shot. You can also use a Viewfinder (see reference) on your dslr. Or using a shoulder rig.

AVOID USING THE ZOOM

Shooting and zooming at an object from a distance can exaggerate the movements your body makes while shooting. But, when you move closer and zoom out, it becomes difficult for your camera to capture your body movements, resulting in a much more stable footage.

USE SUPPORT WHEN NEEDED

Its very important to know when to shoot handheld footage and when to put the camera down on a tripod, a slider, dolly or even a shoulder rig. With a tripod, the camera will be completely stationary and you will have the ability to create smooth tilt and pan movements, but you will be limited to one specific position on the ground. On the other hand, a slider or dolly will sometimes use a tripod as well, but with the addition of the slider can you can push in, out or even slide to both sides in combination with pan and tilt movements, adding cinematic motion to your shots that will make them much more attractive to your clients or the public in general.

B-ROLL

The term B-roll was originated in the old movie making days when movie editors had two different rolls of film to edit from, the A roll and the B roll, which separated the main shots from the secondary ones; today, the term is used to identify the complementary shots we use to tell a story, basically, all the

footage we can capture besides an interview, objects, establishing shots of the location, detailed images of the product, etc. Shooting B-roll is a true art form and the more cinematic and well achieved is your B-roll, the higher the chances of causing a bigger impact with your video. Always make sure you shot A LOT of B-roll, I would even advice that whenever you think you have shot enough B-roll, go ahead and shoot some more. With time you will realize that the difference between an ok and a great video besides the storytelling behind it, is the quality of the broll.



USE THE IMAGE STABILIZER FUNCTION

Some cameras come with an image stabilizer which you can turn on to reduce the shakiness but it usually crops the image to make up for the stabilization process done inside the camera, so when turned on you will lose some space in your shot.

You can also use some of these positions for stable footage

KNEE BEND POSITION

This position requires you to sit with a knee bent up or get down on a knee, then; put your camera on top of your patella for stabilization.

ELBOW PLANT

Use steady objects like tree branches, armrests, fences and so on to keep your arms steady by resting your elbow on them.

THE TAUT STRAP

Put your camera strap around your neck and use it to pull the camera forward until you feel the strap tight around your neck.



STABILIZATION GEAR

TRIPOD

If it goes well with your script, use a tripod for stable shots.

MONOPOD

The monopod is the one-legged sibling of the tripod and it's easier to manipulate for stable footage since it's easy to carry around.

EASY RIG

An easy rig is a piece of gear that will improve the stability of your hand held shots, it is basically a backpack you wear that has a long pole coming up over your head, where you can hang the camera, therefore taking a lot of weight from your back and improving the shakiness and stability of the shot.

EASY RIG

The use of a gimbal has become very popular as many companies started creating more affordable alternatives to the Steadicam, which is a piece of gear still used to this day on movies and commercial sets, it is usually operated by a large individual who can carry the weight of not only the camera but also the armor that holds everything stable. Nowadays gimbals can do a similar job for a fraction of the cost, the weight and the learning curve. Gimbals can produce amazing results if used properly and if not abused as a resource.

6

CHAPTER



LIGHTING

7 STEPS TO START
CREATING HIGH QUALITY VIDEO

When shooting professional video, there is a traditional way of setting up lights to get as much exposure on the subject as you need. This is known as three-point lighting. Basically, it has to do with placing three light stands strategically around your subject, thereby immersing them in light and creating soft shadows on their faces and improving the way they look for the video:

KEY LIGHT

The key light or main light is the one you place at a 45-degree angle to the right or left of your subject. You lift the light above your subject's head and let it aim down. The key light should be bright enough to be the only light in your scene.

FILL LIGHT

You place the fill light at 45 degrees angle on the other side and make sure to lift it close to your eye level. The effect of the fill light would be to moderate the shadows cast by the key light, without completely erasing them. This means you have to make it less bright than the key light, so that it creates a ratio or a difference between the main light which is the key and the complementary light (fill).

BACK LIGHT

Put a light stand behind your object and lift it above their head. Make sure you put it off to the side to avoid it being in the frame. The backlight should be aimed at the back of your subject's head so as to create a soft rim of light and separate them from the background.

Note: Sometimes a 4th point of light can be used directed to the background to accentuate the background color or texture and some other times the 4th point is to generate a rim, hair or back light from both sides of the subject.

Lighting is an essential part of your video since it will set the mood, the aesthetics and it is one of the most important steps in creating a professional look for your productions. In both photography and video, there are two types of light sources you can use:

Hard light
Soft light



A light is considered hard when it's coming directly from the source without any diffusion in front of it. A bulb that is lighting a living room is hard light, but when wrapped with a lamp cover it can become a soft light. A hard light will cast strong shadows on objects and faces while a soft light wraps around objects and creates soft shadows. The smaller a light source is, the harder it is, take the sun as an example and as probably the biggest light there is in our universe. When the sky is clear, the sun seems like a very small light dot in the sky, therefore our nose, our eye sockets and even our hair can create very strong and defined shadows in our face, but when the sky is overcast, meaning there is a huge layer of clouds

under the sun (diffusion), it is still daytime but the light is way softer, and in consequence our faces look much better, lines of expression are softened and the light will evenly cover all of our faces and objects in its way.

The softness of a light source has an invaluable impact on the total outcome of a shoot. The bigger your source is in relation to your subject, the softer it will be, the distance between a light and the subject will also increase or decrease the softness of a light; take the sun example again, once there are clouds under the sun, the clouds become a much bigger light source than the tiny light dot in the sky that we see on clear days, so it becomes softer and even more comfortable to look at. Soft light is considered to be more aesthetically flattering to a subject because it always produces inviting images. You will always need diffusion to create soft light, and there many ways to diffuse a light:

THE SIZE OF A LIGHT SOURCE

A large light source doesn't mean using huge lights. It means creating a huge source of light. For instance; when you point a small light source towards a diffuser or a translucent element, the element becomes the source of light therefore increasing the softness of the source.

DIFFUSION

In a professional setting, big metal frames are usually covered with very large sheets of diffusing material to achieve different qualities of light for different purposes. But using diffusers such as gels, filters, flags, and bouncers over your source of light can do wonders to make your subject more aesthetically pleasing in a shoot. You can also use cheap materials like a bed sheet, shower curtains, silk or diffusion papers. Diffusing your light source might be everything but it's not the only thing that helps give a soft look to your light source.



PROXIMITY

The closer your light is to your subject, the more impact your light has on your subject. Proximity to the subject is another factor that can impact the softness of your light source. Putting your light source closer to your talent will help cast a softer shadow while pulling it back will only create harsh shadows; while exaggerating imperfections to make subjects look far from nice.

7 CHAPTER

EDITING GRAPHICS AND EXPORT



7 STEPS TO START
CREATING HIGH QUALITY VIDEO

How you edit your video depends on the kind of video you are editing and how much visual effects and graphics you want to include but basically; you can follow the steps below to edit any type of video on whichever editing app you use; be it Adobe Premiere Pro, Windows movie maker, Avid Media Composer or any other editor.

IMPORT FOOTAGE TO EDITOR

To begin editing, import your video into your editor by going to the “Local files” tab and clicking on your footage from the folder and then clicking import. Ensure that your editor can support various video file types before proceeding to use it.

ORGANIZE FOOTAGE

Once you have imported all of your footage into your editor, you are going to need to organize it. You can do this by creating a bin on your editor.

MARK NEEDED FOOTAGES

Watch all your footage and decide on what you would be using or needing. Ensure to mark needed footage as you watch them. Do not miss marking any of the clips you need as this will mean having to start over again.

ASSEMBLE FOOTAGE

Drag the marked footage into your timeline, which is a list of all your clips from first to last. Arrange the clips exactly as you want them to come out. If you mistakenly put one before another, drag it right to where you want it.

CLEAR TIMELINE

This means trimming the footage till you feel they are okay. For example, if a clip looks like it has a long pause; trim it appropriately till it is smooth.



Graphics is a very important part of your video production as it adds a whole lot of difference especially to documentaries, demo reels, corporate and commercial productions, news production and also films and video. Graphics which you can add to your video include;

LOWER THIRDS

Also known as chyrons, a lower third are meant to give more information about what they are watching to viewers. Locations, talents and all are part of what could constitute a lower third.

SLATES

This type of graphics is meant to introduce titles, actors, scenes, segments, and parts of your video production.

LOGOS

used for branding enhancements.

Adding graphics to your video is pretty easy. However, designing the graphics to use is what could be challenging. Here are a few tips to follow in creating graphics for your production;

PLAN A THEME

Creating a theme for your graphics is the most important part of graphics creation. The theme you choose should have the same feel as your video concept so as to give a very professional look. Choose a color scheme, appropriate fonts, and images you would need.

DESIGN THE GRAPHICS

Graphics are meant to complement your video, not overshadow it. Therefore, ensure you apply simplicity to your graphic design. Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator and After Effects are some of the apps you can use for designing your graphics.

ADD GRAPHICS TO THE VIDEO

Once your graphics have been designed, ensure the format is compatible with the software you use for editing videos; export to the software and add the graphics to your video.

ADD EFFECTS AND TRANSITIONS

This is where you get to add every necessary thing like filters, texts, transitions and even animations to your video.

EXPORTING YOUR VIDEO



Now, it is time to export your video. The best thing is to export your video in premiere pro to retain very high quality. Exporting your video is an essential skill as it may decide the quality of your video. The export setting you use depends on where you are exporting your video to. Are you exporting to social media? Are you turning into a disc? Do you mean to compress the copy and send to someone? To export your video in general settings;

- Go to File>Export>Media.

Ensure you have already selected the file you want to export.

- Select the setting you wish to put in for the video. Make sure it matches with your video sequence.
- Click output name to use a specific name for the video file.
- Ensure you check both export video and export audio to ensure you export your video with audio.
 - Now, click on either “Queue” or “Export”
- Clicking “Queue” is recommended if you want to export more than one file.
- There you have it! You just exported your file.

CODECS AND FORMATS FOR EXPORTING

Knowing the right format to export your video with is a critical part of your production. There is a whole lot of video formats to export with but knowing the right format for your project can be a quite tedious task. Therefore, we will briefly go through what video formats and codecs are; the types of video formats and; how you should choose the best video format for your production.

WHAT ARE VIDEO CODECS?

Video codecs refer to the type of file formats you use to store digital video data on your computer. When dealing with videos; understand that a huge amount of data is required to depict a video signal. This information will then be compressed and written into a file. There are a lot of formats you can use to save your video and these could be confusing for a newbie. Some formats are used for capturing videos while others are used when editing the video. There are also certain formats that are used mainly when distributing or sharing the video.



COMMON TYPES OF VIDEO FORMATS YOU SHOULD KNOW

FLASH VIDEO FORMAT (.FLV)

The flash video format has become very popular due to the many cross-platforms available for flash video players. Videos in flash format can be played using different flash movie files and; they are supported by different browsers on different platforms. The best thing about flash videos is that they support streaming and also progressive downloads.

AVI FORMAT (.AVI)

Produced by Microsoft, AVI format allows you to store data encoded in various codecs. This format makes use of minor compression when compared to similar formats and is also one of the most popular formats on the internet.

MP4 FORMAT

This format is used to store visual and audio streams on the internet. The MP4 format uses a different compression that works for both video and audio tracks. The video will be compressed using the MPEG-4 codec.

MPG FORMAT

This format is used to encode downloadable videos online

3GP FILE EXTENSION

The 3GP format is used to transmit audio and video files between 3G cell phones and the internet.

THE REALVIDEO FORMAT

This format is mainly used to stream videos online at low bandwidths.

QUICKTIME FORMAT (.MOV)

This video format is designed for saving videos and movies on the internet. It also has multiple tracks that save audios, videos, texts, and effects. Quicktime format is compatible with Windows and Mac.



CHOOSING THE BEST FORMAT FOR EXPORTING YOUR VIDEO

— ONLINE VIDEO PLATFORMS

When sharing video files on platforms such as YouTube, you should use a format such as MP4, FLV, MOV or AVI for exporting. These formats are the best ones recommended for sharing videos to online platforms.

— TV OR COMPUTERS

If your video will be watched mainly on TV and computers, it's advisable to export in HD formats which include MOV, AVI, and MKV. All you have to do is ensure you have enough space on your hard disk since videos with the highest quality take up more space.

— DVD

If you are going to burn your video to a DVD, MPEG-2 should be the ideal format since it would mainly be used on DVD players.

— WEBSITES

WEBM or HTML5 are the two formats that should be used for uploading videos to website. The two formats have small sizes which make them easy to stream online.

Therefore, the format you use should be based on the platform you are exporting your video to.

CONCLUSION

Anybody can make great videos as long as they know the right steps to follow and what to do. Creating high-quality videos for marketing whether as an individual or a brand has become very necessary in the digital age. Therefore, everyone should try as much as possible to hone their video production skills. At Bravo Films and Media, we help people by sharing valuable tips and contents on photography, cinematography and everything else you need to make better videos and films. Video marketing is not that hard; you just need to know your market, what it wants and leave the rest to your camera!

To get more tips, ideas and solutions for all your cinematography or photography issues, visit **www.bravofilmsandmedia.com** now