

QUICK GUIDE FOR PRODUCING POWERFUL VIDEO *By* DOMENIC FUSCO

QUICK GUIDE FOR

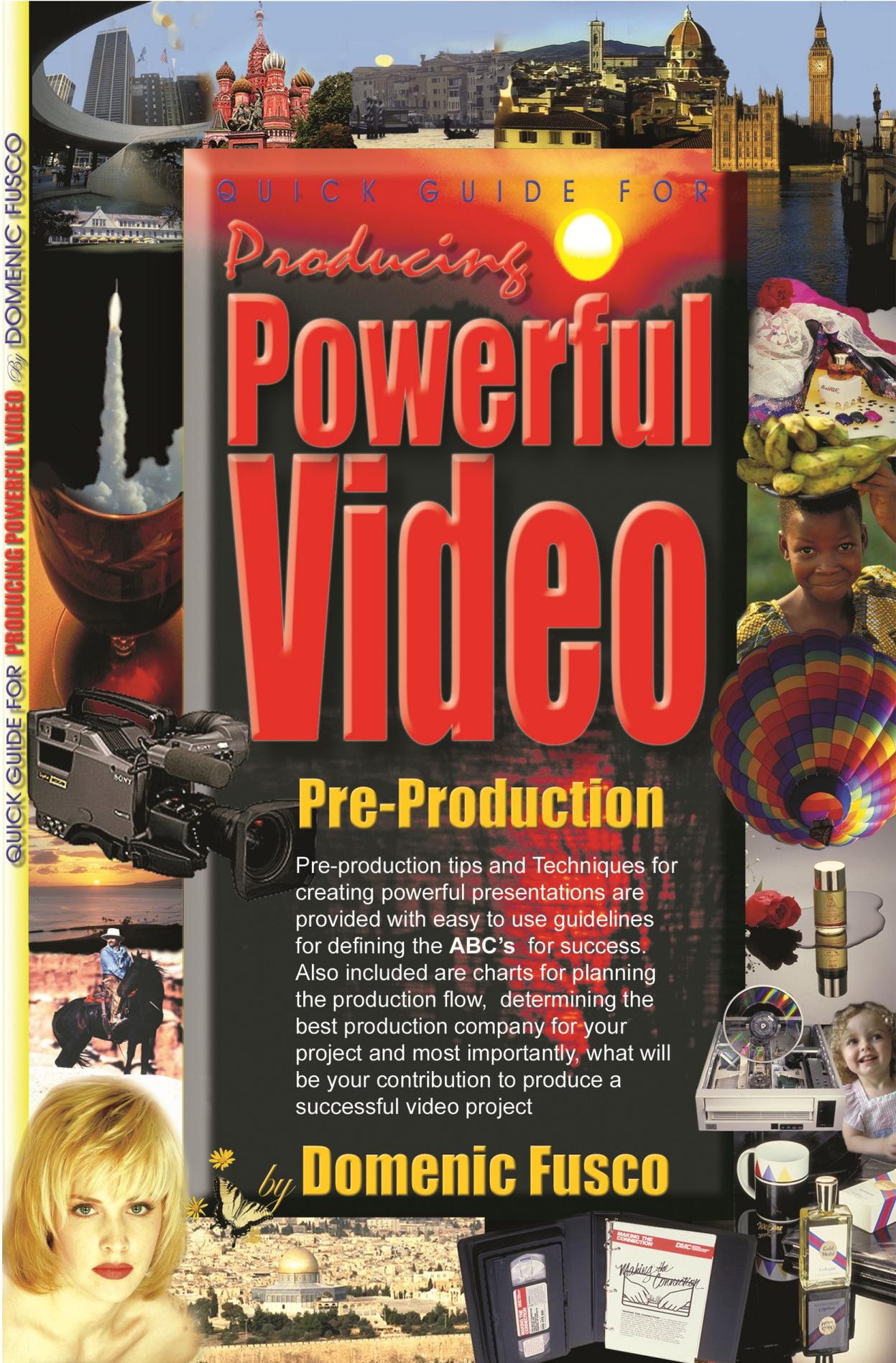
*Producing*

# Powerful Video

## Pre-Production

Pre-production tips and Techniques for creating powerful presentations are provided with easy to use guidelines for defining the **ABC's** for success. Also included are charts for planning the production flow, determining the best production company for your project and most importantly, what will be your contribution to produce a successful video project

*by* **Domenic Fusco**



Cover Design & Photos by Domenic Fusco  
Edited by Charlie Fusco & Giovannina V. Fusco Suluh

**Quick Guide for Producing Powerful Video  
Pre-Production**

Copyright © 2002, 2011  
Domenic Fusco

Published by arrangement with Image Artistry, Inc.

ISBN 0-9722978-0-4

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means whatsoever, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise without the prior written permission of the publisher, except by a reviewer, who may quote brief passages in review.

For information contact:

Image Artistry, Inc.  
P. O. Box 4200  
Sanford FL 32772  
[www.imageartistry.com](http://www.imageartistry.com)

To my wife, Charlie, whose literary skill, artistic talent, and never ending support made this book a reality. And to my wonderful daughter who has always been a delight. She never ceases to use her exceptional talents to make me look good!

"The only way for a man to give birth is to create art."  
Sava Shalman  
St. Petersburg, Russia



## Table of Contents

### Introduction

**1**

#### **The Digital Revolution**

The Steps for Creating Visual Media  
have been turned Upside Down

**2**

#### **The A's of Pre-Production**

Required to Produce Powerful Video Presentations

**3**

#### **The B's of Pre-Production**

Every Great Presentation Contains these Elements

**4**

#### **The C's of Pre-Production**

Three Necessary Steps to Success

**5**

#### **Production Steps to Success**

The Basic Flow and Steps of Producing a Video

**6**

#### **How to Choose the Best Production Co.**

What to Look For and the Right Questions to Ask

**7**

#### **No One Person is a Team**

Your Contribution to a Successful Video

## Introduction

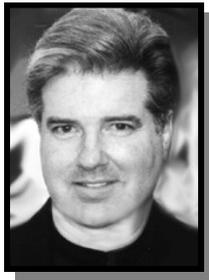


If only I had a copy of the “**Quick Guide for Producing Powerful Video**” two decades ago!

Over the last twenty years, I have produced literally hundreds of videos with budgets ranging from a few hundred dollars into the tens of thousands of dollars. Whether producing a promotional, corporate image, "how-to", employee training or any number of other uses for video, *there is no substitute for knowledge and experience.* Within these pages are years of knowledge and first-hand experience which will give you the tools needed to better understand and implement the skills of video production. For the professional producer, it's a good reminder of how to do the basics well and maybe even learn something new that we hadn't thought of before. No matter what your level of experience is, you will find this book a valuable resource for your next production.

Richard Germaine,

Independent Producer & Marketing Consultant



I have yet to meet anyone with a more adventurous and colorful childhood than I experienced. Every six months my mother would flip a coin, “heads we clean, tails we move.” Ten different schools gave me a *real* education. Those experiences—the life skills gained— mean more today than my high school diploma or college degrees.

I remember when I was ten years old; mom picked up my two brothers and me at boarding school. She said we were going to Las Vegas. At that time, Nevada was the only state in the USA that would grant a divorce in six months. She was with a man who was driving a big, brand new red Eldorado convertible. Wanted by the FBI, it turned out our chauffeur and Mom’s new “friend” was the infamous “Cigar Bandit”. On our trip out West, he robbed banks from NY to Las Vegas lighting the dynamite sticks with his cigar. I still have in my possession a Movado watch he gave me, stolen somewhere between St Louis and Denver. I was told it was worth \$1500 at the time (1955).

And what does all of this have to do with video? Well, videos are stories, and I attribute my success in the wonderful world of video to the experiences of my youth. My *passion to create* and the *power of imagination* was developed while enjoying long hours of freedom as a child. Growing up in the 40’s and 50’s without the constant input of television allowed us to dream our dreams. I attribute my *empathetic sensitivity* to the many cultures I adopted growing up in New York City. My *love of fellowman* came as a result of the pain of a broken family. And finally, my *thirst for knowledge and my desire to share it* was nurtured during my youthful travels and adjustment to develop new relationships in every new neighborhood.

Whether making friends in a new town or creating a powerful video, one must be an observer of life, a lover of mankind and the teller of ageless stories in an ever-changing world. May all your stories have “happy ever after endings”.

*“Today knowledge has power. It controls access to opportunity and advancement.”*  
Peter F. Drucker

# 1

## **The Digital Revolution**

The sequence for creating visual media has been turned upside-down

## The Digital Revolution

Change... it is **change** we have to deal with everyday in our quest to assist corporate America in selling more products, training employees to perform with greater skill and positioning new discoveries in the consumer markets of the world.

Change brings us the **DIGITAL REVOLUTION**. New digital formats and media have an enormous impact on every aspect of society and has delightfully forced innovation on the world of visual media. Video has improved so much that Hollywood films are now being produced on video (High Definition Television [HDTV] format). Filmmakers such as George Lucas are taking full advantage of this new technology. This technology is becoming increasingly affordable and will soon replace the traditional movie-goer's experience as theatres convert from projector/screen to HDTV. In some areas, the change has already begun.

Most importantly, corporate America has the ability to use the advances in *digital* media to get their message to millions of potential clients with expedience and less expense than ever before imagined. Now potential customers can instantly watch a high quality promotional video presentation delivered via the Internet anywhere in the world.

Presentations can be produced in a fraction of the time and at a fraction of the cost of just ten years ago. The process has been simplified. Footage is first captured on a high-resolution *digital* video camera then edited using a *digital* non-linear editing suite. Presentations can be enhanced with 2D and 3D computer graphics and then played back in a variety of ways: Internet display, video cassette, compact disc and more. Although an office may not have a video cassette player, it is almost a sure thing it has a computer... Instant access to your presentation!

Look at what can be done if you begin to think:  
**“Produce Video First!”**



## **“Consider Producing Video First”**

*...then your other media production follows.*

Once your powerful video promotional is produced,  
*a multi-sensual video gives birth to the needed  
media materials for successful market penetration.*

The **STRATEGY** stimulates the creative process.  
**BRANDING** produces focus on image & reputation.  
The **SCRIPT** gives birth to your vision and story.  
The **VIDEO FOOTAGE** creates the needed media.

*Steps 2 through 7 on the next page illustrate the  
benefits of producing **VIDEO FIRST!***

# Consider Producing Video First...

*...then other media production naturally follows.*

# 2

## PHOTOS

There are 30 frames or pictures for each second of video. On a digital editing suite you are able to export any frame as a JPG file and you have a photo! The photos can be used for 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. The only limitation is size (3 to 4 inches wide at 300 dpi).



# 3

## BROCHURE

Once your video promotional is done the creative copy and photos taken from the video footage can be made into a high impact corporate print brochure. This approach assures that a cohesive image is maintained with all your media.



# 4

## WEB SITE

Just imagine your video presentation on the internet. And, by now you realize the photos needed for your internet site can be derived from your video clips. This approach maintains your corporate image, an added benefit of producing video first!





5

6

7

**DATA SHEETS**

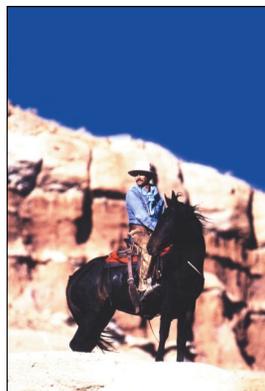
Company Information and photos are simply extracted from video footage and can be added to your data to create your data Sheets required for customer collateral. Whether it is a data sheet, new product release or ad slick it begins with creating a video presentation.

**PRESS SHEETS**

If you have read 2, 3, 4 and 5 it is easy to understand how to create a Press Sheet or Press Release from your video presentation. You save time and money by simply producing a video Promotional first then using the photos and creative copy!

**YOUTUBE & WEB**

Here is one of the most exciting new mediums to sell a vision, product or service. Interact with pages of print and of course actual video footage right from you computer. You can include all of the previous forms of media right on a CD-ROM!



**VIDEO PRODUCTION is not an expense!**

It is an investment. The bottom line matters in Hollywood *and* your company.

Ask yourself: “What would be the return on my investment over the next six months or year”?

“If a new promotional video is used at a trade show, how many new customers will I develop”?

“How many more systems will I sell”?

“If a new and efficient manufacturing process is developed in my division how much money will other divisions save by sharing the process on video”?

“How much better will the sales force perform in front of a potential customer after watching a training video on the benefits of a new product”?

If the answers seem obvious, use this book to conceptualize, formalize, price and produce your next video.

This Quick-Guide is designed to educate and assist in the practical application of twenty-five years of principles, experience and techniques which result in the production of powerful video.

**Consider Producing Video First!**

*“Meticulous planning will enable everything a man does to appear spontaneous”*

Mark Caine

# 2

## **The Four Essential Steps**

Required to Produce  
Powerful Video Presentations

My baseball coach insisted that the game was won before we even entered the stadium. What we thought about our performance was indeed a deciding factor in the outcome of the actual game. *"You win before you begin,"* he'd always say. This is a proven fact! Former Atlanta Braves pitcher, John Smoltz, regularly works on his game with the help of a psychologist. This has resulted in his overcoming former obstacles that mentally hindered his physical performance. The results speak for themselves. Not only has this technique proven effective in baseball, but also in other professional and amateur sports such as basketball where players visualize or mentally rehearse successfully shooting foul shots. The players who utilize this technique increase their game shooting averages over players who practice only on the court. *Visualizing success is a critical factor in winning the game.*

So, what does this have to do with video productions? To create a successful video presentation, you must create every detail of the project in your mind and on the drawing board in detail before it comes to realization. The famous football coach, Vince Lombardi, taught that "whoever best executes the fundamentals wins the game." The fundamentals of producing a successful video or film presentation begins with planning. Start by creating a vision of your objective or AIM. This must be followed by defining your AUDIENCE (demographic, psychographic, geographic, etc.). Next, you should carefully consider the APPROACH that will present your project with clarity and impact to your specific audience. Finally, discern the necessary factors required to motivate your target market/audience toward the ACTION you desire. These are just a few of the steps to be taken before you begin production.

In this chapter, you will learn the A's of planning and creating a successful presentation. Be motivated to create a successful game plan. Know the rules Before you play the game! Cover all the bases. WIN before you BEGIN!

## **The A's of Production**

There is no substitution for a plan or vision. You need a point on the horizon to walk toward. And there is nothing more important than the A's in creating your presentation. In fact they will work for a teacher, preacher, producer or anyone who desires to communicate effectively. Every successful video presentation will have these elements well defined, if not on paper, then in mind. I request that my clients take time to well define each of the A's—for my benefit as well as their benefit. This exercise never fails to create a product the customer is most pleased with, but also a production that achieves the aim. If you were to read only one chapter in *The Quick Guide to Producing Powerful Video...* this is the one!!! Get ready to learn the timeless truths that will be worth their weight in gold. The A's to commit to memory are:

**Aim**  
**Audience**  
**Approach**  
**Action**

## AIM

### Begin with a Specific Purpose.

The following examples illustrate the three major goals behind the creation of video for the corporate world. They are effective and essential for the sales and marketing of a company's products, services, and people.

- A. A presentation that will help you **IMPROVE** performance and effectiveness.

Improve your position in the market place.  
Improve a bad or faltering image.  
Improve comprehension of service and/or product capability.

- B. A presentation that will help you **ACHIEVE** learning objectives and develop behavior (personal growth).

Achieve a greater share of marketplace dollars.  
Achieve a working knowledge of products or services.  
Achieve a greater understanding of corporate goals.

- C. A presentation that will help you **CHANGE** opinions or perceptions.

Change the opinion of product or service capabilities.  
Change the attitude toward company policies or performance.  
Change the perception of personnel.

Your **AIM** or "purpose" might be the task of creating a change and/or improving attitudes in your organization.

Perhaps your aim is to increase the personal performance of your audience. Obviously, the two aims are independent, but can they be interrelated and incorporated into one media presentation?

**THINK... What is the purpose of my presentation?  
Write it down, study it, and meditate on it.**

Is the purpose of your presentation to motivate the members of your corporation to achieve a financial goal directly or indirectly? Is it your desire to challenge apathetic employees to change their behavior and actively participate in corporate efforts? Perhaps your aim is to teach new employees corporate policies and procedures and motivate them to greater work output. Do you wish to have your presentation combine updated product knowledge for the sales force and motivational materials aimed at changing old industry habits? Do you want a closing tool which brings greater financial rewards to your salesmen? Read on!

**Keep the PURPOSE (AIM) simple and clear.**

You must know where you are going, or you'll never know if you have arrived. Document your AIM in writing. Use the space below to document your AIM. This form of commitment will reveal the strength of your AIM. Once you have reached a decision as to the AIM, don't waver from your written goal.

- Promote Your Company
- Sell a Product
- Training
- Inspiration
- Public Relations: Community, Internal, etc.
- New Product Release
- Document an Event
- Video Memo
- Other

# AUDIENCE

## **READ CAREFULLY:**

*This can ultimately be the most important section for creating a successful video or any presentation for that matter.*

## **Communicating to an Audience:**

Communication, according to Webster, is the "act of revealing and transmitting information from one source to another". However, "communication" implies that these ideas and concepts are received and understood, not merely viewed and discarded.

Effective communication must result in retained information by the audience. How much and how well can you communicate your purpose to your audience? Will they receive and retain what you hope to communicate? Can they, and will they, remember the most important point of your presentation?

## **Understanding the Mind of Your Audience:**

Now that you understand that your audience has certain needs, what is the best method for them to receive information. Let us examine the mechanism by which they receive... **The Mind.**

The mind of man can be compared to a video tape recorder. The pictures and sounds we record with a video system are available to be played back when prompted by the operator. This holds true for the mind of man as well. What is seen and heard is stored in memory and is then recalled when the brain is prompted. Hence, the two systems are similar... What you see and hear is what you get. In addition to sight and sound, the human system simultaneously records other tracks like smell, touch, taste, and emotions. How does this information help in analyzing your audience? Just as an operator pushes a button on a video recorder and reviews pre-recorded pictures and audio, likewise the human mind is triggered by external stimuli (a sound, a picture, music, smell etc.) which rewinds memory

tapes to a similar event in his or her memory, bringing all the emotions (feelings) of those memories to the conscious mind, setting up images (sound, sight, emotion, etc.) for reference and use. These might be referred to as *motivating memories*.

Consider information which is stored over the lifetime in the memory of an individual as either:

1. Sights, sounds and emotions that have "identifiable" meaning or value.
2. Sights, sounds and emotions that have little or no "identifiable" meaning or value.

For example: A soundtrack of a French couple calmly discussing (in French) political problems has little or no identifiable meaning to a group of English speaking first-graders from Knoxville, Tennessee. But, a picture of an ice cream cone and a soundtrack offering free ice cream cones to all first-graders would bring excitement to the young group. Images of Nazi war camps might bring painful feelings, tears, and/or anger among a Jewish group, yet cause much less of a reaction among other ethnic groups, and even denial among Anti-Semitic groups. This technique is referred to by Madison Avenue as "hidden persuaders".

The point: the use of sights and sounds with "identifiable" meaning and value cause certain actions and feelings to occur. If you understand the audiences' background (recordings), then you will use pictures and sounds that will most effectively move your audience in the direction you desire to take them. This concept is simple enough, isn't it?

Make a conscious effort to identify the *motivating memories* of your audience and to effectively and artistically portray a presentation of sights and sounds which have identifiable meaning or value to them. For example, the favorite music of baby boomers is 50's and 60's rock 'n' roll while Prime Lifer's enjoy the Big Bands and Frank Sinatra. Remember, your happy memory may be someone else's nightmare. Do your homework. Know your audience.

## **The Pain-Pleasure Zones of Your Audience:**

Once you have a good handle on the concept of how the mind of man functions (like a video tape recorder), consider the decision and discerning area of the mind called the "pleasure-pain zone" or as some call it the "comfort zone." The "comfort zone" is a category of pictures, emotions, sounds, feelings, tastes, etc. with which the mind is familiar and accepts as its domain for existence. Once outside this domain, the mind experiences pain or discomfort, then reacts to preserve itself by motivating actions that drive the individual back into his/her comfort zone. READ THAT AGAIN!... Now what are some things, events, tastes, etc., which are in your pleasure-pain zone? How about spinach? Communists? Puppies? Hot-dogs? Catholics? Protestants? Cadillac's? Elvis? Note the comfort or pain of one person may be very different than that of another. For example, a six foot man who weighs 280 lbs. may pay little attention to the types of food he eats (fast food, etc.) while another six foot, 175 lb. man may be very health conscious and greatly aware of the effects of a high sugar and fat diet. An advertisement for doughnuts would affect the two men in very different ways. Ethnic background, present work environment (urban/rural), religious affiliation, colors, and music styles are just a few of the examples of areas where comfort (pain-pleasure) zones are a consideration.

Here is the "key":

**PEOPLE DO NOT LIKE TO LEAVE THEIR COMFORT ZONE! THEY RESIST CHANGE. CHANGE IS PERCEIVED AS PAIN OR DISCOMFORT.**

Even if an environment is painful, it is a "known commodity". Change may cause fear of greater discomfort and will cause the audience to resist moving. What pictures and programs has your audience stored over their lifetime? What is their comfort zone? Define their corporate pleasure-pain zone (their collective pleasure-pain zone).

As an exercise, consider the comfort zones with regard to images, color, music, desires, distaste's, etc. of the groups below. Think of regional differences (southwest vs. northeast), age differences (senior citizens vs. baby boomers), and educational differences (post graduates vs. high school dropouts).

<b>Teenagers</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Clergy</b>
<b>Urban Dwellers</b>	<b>Politicians</b>	<b>Mothers</b>
<b>Affluent People</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Leaders</b>
<b>Farmers</b>	<b>Working Class</b>	<b>Executives</b>
<b>Military Personnel</b>	<b>Liberal Activists</b>	<b>Kids</b>
<b>Ethnic Groups</b>	<b>Nuns</b>	<b>News People</b>
<b>Right-to-Lifers</b>	<b>Cooks</b>	<b>Sportsmen</b>

In the corporate world we might consider the pain-pleasure zones of corporate management, salesmen, buyers, high-tech personnel, accountants, secretaries, production personnel and end users.

Who is your Audience ?

*Define Your Audience in Detail! This is the greatest area of failure when beginning a video project. Don't assume anything. Write down an accurate profile of your audience. Ask questions! Do research!*

**Now, take a few moments and describe the audience you are targeting with your video:**

**Define and describe your target Audience:**

- Satisfied customer?
- Former customer with reservations?
- Not a customer, but a serious inquiry?
- Uninformed public?
- Other: write it down below:

**What will motivate them to continue their loyalty?**

**The Audience *Pleasure* zone is:**

- Service
- Quality
- Price
- Other: write it down below:

**What will cause them to turn to the competition?**

**The Audience *Pain* zone is:**

- Bad Service
- Poor Quality
- Pricing
- Other: write it down below:

**What image (Audience perceptions) will draw new customers toward your product, service or company?**

**What will motivate your audience to participate in your program or buy your service or product?**

- Fear of loss
- Religious or value conviction
- Be recognized as a user of your product (Mercedes)
- Savings
- Fun
- Hunger
- Peace of mind
- Need for your service of product

List Other perceived benefits below:

**What benefits will inspire your audience to spend more time and money to further a specific cause?**

What identifiable sights (pictures) will bring pleasure or pain to your audience? Describe briefly below:

**Where will your Audience view your presentation?**

- Are they a captured audience assembled for a meeting?
- Are they paying?
- Are they an uninterested, yet potential customer?
- Will they view your video only once or multiple times?
- At work?...
- Home?...
- Public presentation?

***This will help determine the length of your video and aid in developing the approach.***

Have you thoroughly analyzed your audience (the working of their collective minds)? Have you defined their associated comfort zones? This approach will lay the foundation for an effective presentation with discernible impact. Answers to the aforementioned questions should be written down. It will take sensitivity, empathy, honesty, and demographic and psychographic research to answer these questions thoroughly. **The success of your project rests on your ability to meet your audience where they are while motivating them toward your desired results.**

Use the space below to list other thoughts about your **AUDIENCE** that could help achieve your **AIM**. Now on to the **APPROACH** that will most effectively accomplish your **AIM**.

## APPROACH

Now that you have defined your AIM (purpose for your presentation) and analyzed your AUDIENCE, it is time to develop your APPROACH. Someone once said, *"If you are going to catch fish, you have to use attractive bait or scare them into the net"*. Everyone knows a real fisherman fishes with bait (artificial or live) that is attractive or desirable to the type of fish he or she expects to catch. Yet, many of us expect to create a presentation which catches the viewer's eye and keeps his attention *without consideration of their personal tastes*. Very often the director is only concerned with his taste. If the creative director does not ask you about your audience in detail, pay close attention! This may be a warning.

This aspect of analyzing your audience requires empathy (i.e. putting yourself in their shoes). It may be difficult for some of us to think like a fish and develop a fish's taste, but if we intend to create a presentation that brings results, we must have empathy or employ the insights of those who know their tastes and habits well. Empathy means you understand how they feel; sympathy means you join them in how they feel -- do not sympathize; empathize with your audience.

Another way of catching fish is to "scare them into the net". *The fear of loss has much more motivating power than the thought of gain!* What will motivate your audience? Consider how the fear of loss is used in advertising as a great motivating force. (limited offer! only one week left! etc.).

To best develop your APPROACH you must first answer the question your AUDIENCE is going to ask:

### “SWIIFM”

This will determine if you swim or sink with your audience. So what does SWIIFM mean? Turn the page.

## So What's In It For Me?

What *benefits* your audience? *Do not describe the features of your company or product* but the *benefits* it offers the specific market you are targeting. Write it down below:

- We save our customers money.
- We save our customer Time.
- Provide Safety.
- Increase profits.
- Other

Developing a powerful presentation (video or otherwise) obviously begins with knowing the benefits your product or service provides relative to the competition. But, how do you creatively develop a powerful video if you have little or no experience? To a great degree you may rely on competent experienced professionals such as a creative video group. Ad agencies often work in the world of print media and do not employ the same disciplines as those in the moving visual arena. A paragraph of well-crafted copy necessary for expressing an idea can be accomplished with few if any words and a few related video cuts.

Following are a few hints that will help you clarify your APPROACH. Consider the various type of advertising:

### **Product Advertising.**

This type of advertising illuminates what the product is or what service you provide. It was the essence of the world of advertising in the late 1940s and 50s when all you had to do was simply tell your audience what you had and what it did.

### **Image Advertising:**

An extensive period of branding or aligning your product or service with a desirable event, location, emotion, etc. This was powerful during the 1970s and part of the 1980s.

## **Positioning:**

Today's audience is over saturated with information. Therefore, positioning is essential. It is a matter of making a connection with the audience by placing your product or service inside an unoccupied position in ones mind. The position may be first, premium, smallest, positioned with a country or city, etc. It is a mix of the three types of advertising that will bring success, but *positioning* is the most powerful technique to employ today.

## **The Basic Elements in a Powerful Video**

Every effective presentation has three elements. You must define these and the approach will begin to emerge or develop:

- 1. PROBLEM (or CHALLENGE or NEED)**
- 2. SOLUTION (or OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGE)**
- 3. APPEAL**

### **Define the PROBLEM:**

What images/ideas/situations/events describe the pain zone of your potential customer-consumer?

- World Pollution    Hunger    Shortage    Danger
- Inefficiency    Design    Poor service
- Lack of speed    Too expensive    Image
- Aggravating and laborious task without your product

Define the problem or challenge your target audience has ***without*** your product or service:

*Please note the time you spend on the problem portion of your video is short. It may simply be a 10 to 30 second statement with images that stimulate the Pain Zone of your audience.*

### **Define the SOLUTION:**

This is where you emphasize the major ***benefits*** of your product or service to your audience. Again, do not emphasize features only. The images (visual, narration and music) will accomplish that task.    **List the solutions:**

**Begin to develop the APPEAL.**

**What images and words best sell your product or service?**

Ask your leading sales people what works for them. What photos have worked for you in the past?

**What images get your audience's attention and develop desire and interest?**

What color(s) best enhance your presentation? Here is a quick and simplistic review of the psychology of color:

<b>Green:</b>	<b>Money, Credibility, Life, Stability</b>
<b>Blue:</b>	<b>Truth, Fidelity, Most favorite-comfortable, pleasant (especially for men)</b>
<b>Red:</b>	<b>Motivating, Irritating at times, Sensual</b>
<b>Orange:</b>	<b>Most disliked by adults-loved by kids under 4</b>
<b>Purple:</b>	<b>Royal, elite, important, most creativity</b>
<b>Turquoise:</b>	<b>Denotes discriminating taste</b>
<b>Yellow:</b>	<b>Happy, Growth, Home, Friendship</b>
<b>Pink:</b>	<b>Femininity, Motherhood, Health</b>

**What type of music will keep them right in the center of their comfort zone? And Irritate them?**

What music will make your audience feel comfortable, uneasy, repulsed, invigorated, motivated?

- country
- classical
- alternative
- 50's
- adult contemporary
- rock
- rap
- opera

**What technique will best grasp and hold your audience's attention?**

- humor
- statistics
- hi-tech
- educational
- highly recognizable spokesperson
- drama
- news
- story telling
- facts about the industry

List Others below:

What will affirm or change their feelings?

**Why will they want to change, improve, and/or achieve greater heights with your product or service?**

- The service is new and improved
- The product is the most competitive
- Your service is second to none

List Others below:

<b><u>The Motive</u></b>	<b><u>Possible Approach</u></b>
The need to belong-	I will lose out without you
The desire to see progress-	Certain traditions may be hindrances.
The fear of loss-	You'll only have this offer once in a lifetime...
The thought of changing-	Look what successful people do!
The desire to be like others-	Clothes make the man!
The love of country-	Our love of country is rooted in our freedoms!
The desire to make money-	Look what success buys you!
The desire to lose weight-	You can never be too thin or too rich!
Make a list of other motives and possible approaches that relate to your project in the space below.	
<b><u>The Motive</u></b>	<b><u>Possible Approach</u></b>

With the previously defined information, you can now begin to work with the creative team. Develop an effective APPROACH with words, music, and visuals that will get your audience's attention. Develop an interest and produce a desire for your product or service.

Now for the fourth essential and most important step to ensure the production of a Powerful Video Presentation:

## **ACTION**

*"Let not your studies lead only to knowledge...  
Let your studies lead to action."*

William E. Bailey

If your presentation does not provoke your audience into **Action**, you have missed the mark! Your message should bring results, and that will be, as previously stated, a "change," an "improvement," or an "achievement" in someone or of something. Again, your presentation must **motivate people to Action...** and that action will bring results.

What type of action do you expect your video to accomplish?

- Better trained employees.**
- An increase in sales production.**
- A foot in the door of very large accounts.**
- A new type of business from old customers.**
- Increased investment from your stockholders.**
- Motivated employees - improved self-esteem.**
- Consumer motivated to pick up their phone  
and call you**
- Reach a new niche market**

**Define your action in the space below:**

**One last point:** In the realm of a diversified corporate media plan, it is sometimes difficult to determine the success of a presentation in terms of money. Financial return-on-effort may be impossible to directly gauge, especially when the consideration and purpose of your media is motivation or public relations. Nevertheless, you will see **Action** if your presentation is effective.

Once you have discussed and defined the four A's (**AIM, AUDIENCE, APPROACH, and ACTION**), you will be well on your way to producing a powerful video. Stay tuned!!!

*“Everything you want has a price connected to it. There’s a price to pay if you want to make things better, a price to pay just for leaving things as they are, a price for everything.”*

Harry Browne



## **The B's of Pre-Production**

Every Great Presentation  
Contains these Elements

## **The B's of Pre-Production**

Video, like any other communication medium, can be good and/or bad. David Ogilvie, one of the all time advertising genius', wrote in his book Advertising by David Ogilvie that one ad will draw 25 times more response than another. Although they are selling the same product, the ad sizes are identical and placed in equally effective locations in the same issue of a magazine, one ad will prove to be better. The ad that draws a greater response is not only creative but exercises the basics of good advertising. The same holds true for video presentations.

A video has to be more than a piece of visual and aural artistry. It must also be pragmatic. A video presentation must accomplish its AIM and move the audience to an appropriate ACTION. In the previous section the initial planning stages which include the four A's: AIM, AUDIENCE, APPROACH, and ACTION were elaborated. Have you taken the time to define and write these down? If not, stop reading now! Go back and write down your AIM, AUDIENCE, APPROACH and ACTION. Once you have the A's well defined, move on to the development of the actual flow and script of the video with help from the B's of video production:

**BIG PICTURE  
BASIC SOLUTION  
BECOME INVOLVED**

## BIG PICTURE

Create a "**Big Picture**" with your presentation. This may include one of the following categories:

### **1. Illumination of a PROBLEM.**

In the corporate world you may encounter quality problems. This can best be illustrated in the automotive industry. America lost a significant amount of market share to the Japanese and European auto makers. In the recent past, the list of the five top quality cars in the world did not include an American car. Through meeting the needs of the consumer and mass media campaigns promoting "American Pride", "American Made", and "Jobs for Americans", the US car market is on the rise, and foreign companies are moving manufacturing to the US and hiring US auto workers. Patriotic media blitzes would not have won the battle to sell more US made vehicles if quality had not risen and prices decreased. Creatively and effectively illuminating problems and communicating real solutions is often the video producer's goal. Societal problems, such as drugs, the homeless, abortion rights, and the abused are brought to light through the video medium and the results or efforts to help are enhanced or diminished by the diligence and expertise of the presentation or producer.

### **2. Develop a CONFLICT.**

Top films use tension to add interest: good against bad, right against wrong, God against the Devil, a "love" triangle. In industry, the conflict may be caused by diametrically opposing parameters (management vs. union workers). A case in point might be the size of a car versus gas mileage. What conflict applies in your arena?

### **3. Communicate a CHALLENGE.**

So many times we hear about America's decline in excellence. This may be industry's greatest challenge. Research and development, education, meeting schedules, and a

return to integrity in business ethics are but a few of the challenges to communicate. Overcome a moral crisis.

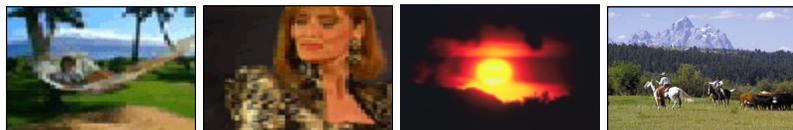
#### **4. Define a DREAM or VISION**

Sharing a vision to create a better product, service or a better world might be your "big picture". Use your imagination and develop a dream or vision that is uniquely your own. Back your presentation with research that will present a credible and believable way to achieve "the challenge of a life time".

#### **5. Search for a STANDARD**

Excellence, quality, and the establishment of a standard might be your big picture. It is an important issue that may include new and innovative systems such as the safety standards recently introduced, and now commonplace, in the use of airbags for cars. A history of success that inspires teams like Alabama and Notre Dame to continue the winning tradition may become the big picture of your video presentation. Better still, perhaps your standard will challenge politicians to become statesmen.

**The "Big Picture" moves your audience  
off center and grabs their attention.  
Once you have the "Big Picture"  
in mind, you must resolve it  
with the Basic Solution.**



## **BASIC SOLUTION**

In a presentation, which should be positive and result in good feelings, it is important to spend only a brief time establishing the problem. This is especially true when the audience is not captive, that is, they have not paid to see the video or were not asked by their employer to attend its viewing. Here are some simple, yet effective, solutions to the BIG PICTURE.

### **1. We have to SOLVE the PROBLEM**

Problem: mice in the rice. Here is the solution; a better mouse trap, a less expensive "gadget" that is rodent friendly (the trap does not kill the mouse). State how your goal can be accomplished and can put an end to a "pesty" and destructive problem.

### **2. RESOLVE the CONFLICT**

Conflict: a large car with low gas mileage. Solution: reduce the weight without affecting the size and safety. Tell the secret of how it is accomplished. Conflict: A marriage is in jeopardy. Resolved: through counseling the union is repaired by revealing a breakdown in communications and expounding on the proper communication techniques. Good wins out, etc..

### **3. MEET the CHALLENGE**

"Ask not what your country can do for you... Ask what you can do for your country". These words by John Kennedy challenged an entire generation. Challenge the audience toward tenacity, determination, hard work (the old fashioned way), dedication, knowledge, leadership, inspiration, on-going education, spiritual growth, etc.. in order to achieve the Big Picture.

### **4. ACCOMPLISH the GOAL/VISION**

For example: you might illustrate accomplishment as follows: "Finally, after 40 years, we have done it!" "For generations we have held fast to our forefather's vision and we all have a lot to thank them for". Consider the stirring words of Martin Luther King, Jr., "I have a Dream"... "We shall

over come someday". Now, illustrate the stepping stones to accomplish and expound the vision to be reached.

#### **5. SET the STANDARD**

Once the challenge is set, show the new standard of excellence achieved: new boundaries pioneered, the best of the show, the breaking of an Olympic record, the discovery of new non-invasive medical treatments, the return of factual journalism. These are a few ideas which illustrate the need for you to define a Basic Solution for the Big Picture. Do not under-estimate the power of simplicity. Keep it simple and be sure you execute the basics described above. You will find it is more important to accomplish the client's goals than win awards from your peers in the advertising community.

## **BECOME INVOLVED**

Once you have defined your **BIG PICTURE** and **BASIC SOLUTION**, keep in mind that the ultimate goal is to get people to **BECOME INVOLVED**.

When all is said and done, you must ask yourself, will this video motivate the audience. Will there be an emotional connection made?

**Buy Your Products?**  
**Contribute to your charity?**  
**Use Your Service?**  
**Change their Opinion about Your Products?**  
**Send Money?**  
**Vote Yes?**  
**Attend Your Facility?**  
**Participate in Your Cause?**  
**Develop an Interest in this New Method?**  
**Choose Your Resort and Visit?**  
**Work Harder at their Job?**  
**Become a Partner Instead of Just a Worker?**  
**Continue to Believe You Offer the Best Service?**  
**Travel on your airline?**  
**Buy season passes?**  
**Call Your Company for a Free...?**

The **BIG PICTURE** should be "attention getting" (move your audience off center) and produce interest while the **BASIC SOLUTION** should motivate and convince your audience to **BECOME INVOLVED**. Techniques utilized to accomplish these tasks vary. The use of audio visual images drive the audience out of their comfort zone by use of shock, excitement, hate, joy, horror, failure, injustice, beauty, and so on. Offering a logical, humane, right, or correct solution or path of resolve, aids in their involvement or choice of action.

**With these principles in mind, proceed with the conceptualizing and writing of a script.**

Review your A's (**AIM, AUDIENCE, APPROACH, & ACTION**). Make a list of the B's (**BIG PICTURE, BASIC SOLUTION, & BECOME INVOLVED**) that best serve your presentation needs. Once you are convinced you will accomplish the task at hand with the A's and B's, move on to the C's of successful video production.

*“Knowing where you are going is all you need to get there.”*

Carl Frederick

# 4

## **The C’s of Pre-Production**

Three Necessary Steps for Success

## The C's of Pre-Production

You have almost completed the all-important "Win Before You Begin" phase of producing a successful presentation. The A's and B's are seeds that are planted and germinated in the creative process. Birthing the C's comes in production.

Just how important is this section? Raiders of the Lost Ark is the perfect example of how important the C's of production are to success. The screenwriter engaged in a collaborative effort with George Lucas and Steven Spielberg to produce one of Hollywood's top grossing films. As the story goes, the three creative minds wrote the final script after discussing what events they always wanted to see in a adventure movie. "Snakes, thousands of snakes" and "a great big ball chasing the hero", were two of the scenes which were written, critiqued, and rewritten into one of the most exciting movies of all time. The process: concepts to script, critique, production of the rewritten script. By the way, there are no great script writers; only Re-writers.

A good script can make a director, but even a great director can not always produce a good movie with a bad script. It begins with the conceptual flow. It is my belief that this phase, the **ABC's, is the most important phase in the video creation process**. Pay close attention to the art and science of the following steps:

### CONCEPTUAL FLOW COMPOSING A SCRIPT CRITIQUE

## CONCEPTUAL FLOW

Create a Conceptual Flow: A conceptual flow, or outline, is a sequential list of events that occur in the video presentation. This includes a description of all the topics and visuals of the video as they appear in order. Always have all key decision makers (video producer, creative director and company executives) agree on the conceptual flow and have it signed off before you create a script (signatures of all decision makers should be obtained before you begin script writing). You may have copies of the schedule and responsibilities for tasks to be accomplished also attached for signing. If your client is responsible for talent releases, permits, and other important items, attach that agreement and have it signed off before proceeding to assure there is no misunderstandings as to what all players must do to accomplish a tight schedule and stay on budget. The more details of the video production you have defined and signed off, the more successful you will be as a producer. Do not proceed without a clear documented agreement of all details by all the decision makers. Surprises are almost always costly and even damaging to the final outcome of your project.

Now you are ready to proceed in the development of your Conceptual Flow, the first "C" of a successful presentation:

### **Give Your Audience the Unexpected.**

Remember, the mind will develop "perceptual filters" to block out familiar and commonplace information and images. So, give your audience the unexpected! Someday the unusual will become commonplace, then you can use what used to be commonplace as the unusual (Woodstock then and now). Getting and keeping the attention of your audience to achieve your purpose will require that you surprise, shock, or somehow move your audience with the unexpected. Even when educating, you must peak interest with the unexpected.

**Take Your Audience Out of Their Environment.**

Most people, unfortunately, are not content with their lives. Taking people forward in time (Star Wars, Back to the Future) or back in time (Chariots of Fire, Howard's End, etc.) has proven to be a very successful money making technique. It is a well-known secret that man will more readily receive from a stranger ("a prophet is without honor in his own town"), than he will from friends and family. Do not take this concept lightly when conceptualizing your presentation. Disarm the viewer with a new world/new environment: a majestic scene in the South Seas, cardboard shelters of the homeless.

**Contradict a Well-known or accepted Truth.**

"I will prove there is no God." To a church audience, this would be an alarming contradiction of the truth. "On a clear day, you can see Hawaii from Los Angeles. Here, look how close they are on the map... only 3 inches away." Sometimes a contradiction will get attention and move your audience. To be effective, you must be sure your contradiction is obvious to all.

**You Can Say That Again... You Can Say That Again.**

The secret to "Madison Avenue advertising" is repetition. Not only does a detergent commercial come into your home 40 or 50 times a day, but in each repetition of the ad you are first told (sold): what they are going to do. Next, they do it; and at last, they tell you what they've just done. Many other products use this time-proven formula. Repeat your point in many ways and forms throughout the presentation. Utilize lyrics, pictures, illustrations, testimonies, and narration to say it... and say it again.

**Make One Point:**

I have a poster in my office which says: "The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing". If your audience remembers one thing, "the main thing", (your main point) you are on your way to success! So, repeat your "purpose" many times in many ways. Do not present more than your

audience can absorb or easily remember. Most of the time a short presentation is more effective than a long presentation. For example, a 6 to 10 minute presentation is

an acceptable length for a promotional presentation. Fifteen minutes and beyond is acceptable for a teaching presentation, but in most cases, is too long for a promotional. Too often the client wants to "say it all" when most often the goal is to sell a product or service and not to thoroughly educate. Entertainment media can be much longer (1 hour plus) in that concentrated thought or memorization is not a requirement.

**Never Admit You Are Presenting An Educational or Sales Presentation.**

The purpose of your presentation may be educational or sales oriented, but the means of reaching that destination can be greatly enhanced by an entertaining format. For example, a presentation for children's education might be narrated by a child and filled with music ("Hooked on Phonics worked for me!"). By entertaining your audience, the lesson is caught, rather than directly taught. It is a good rule to evaluate your presentation on entertainment value first, then be sure the presentation meets its purposes. Keep their interest!

**Presenting something "different" is the key to getting attention and developing interest.**

The first basic step to selling is getting attention. The second is developing interest. The five steps to selling should be considered when conceptualizing a script: 1. attention, 2. interest, 3. desire, 4. close, 5. fulfill the promise/follow-up. Television programs and commercials do the craziest things imaginable to achieve "the sale". They must get your attention in a mega-media world. List some conceptual approaches you think will be "different" and grab the attention of your audience. Choose different approaches that may be emotional, humorous, high action, or mysterious.

One other thing to consider: what level of awareness does the product or service have with your target audience? Product awareness falls into three general categories and requires three different approaches:

**1. Pioneering Effort:** Your audience must be taught what your product is, what it does, and how your product benefits them. A typical example might be new hi-tech items such as the computer scanner, software programs, personal communications systems, etc..

**2. Competitive Effort:** Your product use and benefits are well understood, but a number of companies offer virtually the same form and function. Soap, food, clothes, hair products, mouse traps, etc.. In this case, the creative challenge is to show your product in a different light or develop associations that cause the audience to perceive they will receive additional benefits when using the product.

**3. Keep Alive:** Your product is the leader in your industry. Your goal is to maintain your share of the market and not lose ground; Coke, Chevy, etc.. Consider the position of your product or service in the marketplace when creating the conceptual flow of your presentation. It helps to test your ideas and concepts on a target market. Again, there are specialized companies that do "test marketing". Utilize such a service when the stakes are high, such as an expensive national advertising campaign. However, it is important to test your ideas, even on a small scale. Find out if your video draws the calculated or desired response through test marketing to a small segment of your target market before distributing to the masses.

The creative process of developing a conceptual flow, as well as writing a script, includes the following ingredients:

**ILLUMINATION...**

**INSPIRATION...**

**INCUBATION...**

**ACTIVATION.**

**Illumination:**

Collect facts. Read all brochures, literature, advertising and public relations materials available from your client. Study the industry/product, the competition, demographics, geographics, psychographics, and the newly added spirographics (spiritual values as they relate to your project). Use the library liberally. Next, be sure to spend quality time with your client absorbing his or her ideas, tastes, and style. Your client must feel good about what you create as it represents him and/or his product to his market. Make sure you have the input of all the decision makers. The facts with which you illuminate your mind will be used to create the presentation and produce an effective communications tool. Remember, it is essential that your client is comfortable with the presentation. It to his desired action.

**Inspiration:**

Ideas and concepts are formed. What unusual approach will you take? What comfortable words will soothe your audience? What will shock them? Write them down on the back of this page. Don't think you will remember all of the ideas that come to mind. Write down words and visual concepts. They are easily forgotten when you are working on several projects at one time. Do not make light of how easily inspiration may come to mind. Most often, it is the inspired idea that just "drops out of the sky" that makes the difference between a hit and a mediocre presentation.

**Incubation:**

Rushing the creative process can rob you of the best. Digest and think over your concepts and facts. This is a must! Plan on taking time to incubate the concepts you have in mind surrounded by a relaxed or stimulating setting (the beach... inspiring music, etc.). Out of incubation will come additional inspiration and new concepts and development.

**Activation:**

Once you have developed your conceptual flow, share your ideas with your client or sponsor. You must remember, how you look does not depend on what you wear, but how you feel about what you wear. What form of dress do you prefer: formal wear or jeans? Soft unstructured dressing or tailored classics? Subtle neutrals or bold patterns and colors? Your sponsor/client must feel comfortable with your concepts. The client's comfort with the end product is always more important than yours. They have to fit his style and comfort zone. This might take some salesmanship and compromise. If the client's comfort zone cramps your style or you believe his changes will harm the final project, review the A's and B's with him to clarify your approach. After the client agrees to the flow and plan of action for the project, make all required changes and additions in your conceptual flow and document it. Then, have them sign your contract or agreement. At this point in production, you should have required and received at least one third to one half of the payment for the total project.

**HOW TO DEVELOP A CONCEPTUAL FLOW OR OUTLINE ON PAPER!**

The conceptual flow may include five to ten general segments for an entire video. For example, a travel video might be broken into the following segments:

1. Intro: Hot, upbeat music and pictures of well known travel sights.
2. Big Picture: The conflict: The travel industry is changing. Beware if you are deciding to start a travel agency.
3. Basic Solution: Experts say successful agencies execute the following....
4. The ABC Travel Network offers new agencies the following to assure their success in the travel business.
5. Appeal to Action (Become Involved) The travel business can be fun and profitable. Testimonies by

successful members of the ABC Travel Network who reaffirm the specific points made about what successful agencies do and how ABC helped them excel.

6. Close with excitement: Travel sights, cruises, etc.. Be sure to include the theme of adventure, fun, excitement, and prosperity that the prospective client can expect to experience in the travel business.

**Keep in mind your A's and B's and create a presentation with impact and information.**

Once you have a Conceptual Flow on paper, share it with your client. This will take explanation. Most clients will have to be sold on the ideas presented. Be open to ideas and possible misunderstandings that may have developed and adjust the conceptual flow accordingly. After having sat through hours of meetings, I have proceeded to create a conceptual flow, only to realize upon presentation, that my ideas were counter-productive to those of personnel who were not in the initial meeting. Once the conceptual flow is agreed upon, print a copy of the final flow for each of the key decision makers. Leave enough space (lines) at the bottom for the signatures of each involved party beginning with your name. Have a date next to each name. This will help to move the project along and short-circuit any delays. Now you are ready to write the script. List the five to ten general segments to be presented in your video (conceptual flow) below and on the back of this page.

## COMPOSING A SCRIPT FOR VIDEO

A script for a simple 30 second commercial might be done on a napkin while sipping coffee. The other side of script composition can be found in a feature length screen play. There are a number of software programs such as **Final Draft** which is popular for the Hollywood script. In fact you must follow this format to even get your script read by the studios. There are a few exception like you're married to George Lucas.

Before you purchase Final Draft there is, in my opinion, a better product at [www.celtx.com](http://www.celtx.com). The software is free and has some great features for any script writing project.

Download Celtx and get familiar with the film writing format. There are only a few styles (categories) to learn:

<b>Scene Heading</b>	Ctrl 1
<b>Action</b>	Ctrl 2
<b>Character</b>	Ctrl 3
<b>Dialog</b>	Ctrl 4
<b>Parenthetical</b>	Ctrl 5
<b>Transition</b>	Ctrl 6
<b>Shot</b>	Ctrl 7
<b>Text</b>	Ctrl 8

The project templates available in this free software include:

**Film**  
**Audio Visual**  
**Theatre**  
**Audio Play**  
**Storyboard**  
**Comic Book**  
**Novel**

You will love the ease with which you will write professional scripts using this well produced software.

## CRITIQUE

### **Evaluation of Your Presentation**

The success and impact of your presentation will strongly depend on your ability to evaluate your work. Evaluation is not an opinion or subjective view offered by the man on the street. It is a measurement of your presentation by guidelines or standards. One might call it a judgment of the effectiveness in creatively meeting your objectives and purposes. Start in the design phase and evaluate concepts in relationship to your audience. Secondly, be sure to ask qualified or informed people the right questions about the script. "Evaluate the evaluator and do not believe everything you hear." Remember, everyone has opinions. Go outside your creative team whenever possible for objectivity. Do not be a defensive producer who argues with any criticism, but readily accept input from qualified people. Be honest and willing to change, redo, and recreate where necessary. Hard work and proper evaluation at each step will prove to be worth its weight in gold.

### **"DON'T CRITICIZE, CRITIQUE"**

I believe Walt Disney's great success was partially achieved by the fact that he never allowed criticism of ideas, no matter how ridiculous they might have seemed at the time. Those crazy ideas might have use in the next project. Critique the validity of an idea for your production or script, but don't criticize the person or group who dares to express (his/their) creativity.

### **CRITIQUE YOUR SCRIPT**

Here are a number of points you can use to critique your script.

**Title:** Will it grab the audience's attention?

Is it appropriate for the Aim?

Is there high identity in the title?

**Lead:**

Are the first words an interest grabber?  
Is it well-established for your topic?

**Organization:**

Is there a clear focus on your approach?  
Is the central purpose of your video stated?  
Are the main points logically and effectively presented?

**Content:**

Are the ideas well developed?  
Are the illustrations and details clear and applicable? Does the script have originality?

**Style:**

Is the copy interesting and varied?  
Is the vocabulary appropriate or beyond/below the audience? Does the music compliment the narrator and express the desired emotion?

**Documentation:**

Is the research evident or is the script shallow?  
Are the sources credible and current?

**Development of Ideas:**

Are the thoughts thoroughly developed?  
Are there any unfinished ideas?

**Conclusion:**

Will the audience be absolutely involved?  
Will your aim and goal be achieved?

**Movement:**

Is there a logical flow (continuity)?  
Are there good transitions?

**Awareness:**

Does the script meet the audience's needs?  
Does it offer the audience sufficient information to  
make a decision or form an opinion?

**Audience:**

Will it hold their interest?  
Is it simple and to the point (clarity)?  
Does it target your market effectively?  
Will the audience be moved to the predefined  
action?

In no way does this section contain the detail and intelligence necessary to develop great conceptual and script writing skills. It does however, serve as an introduction to the basic ingredients necessary to produce a presentation that is not only artistic, but pragmatic.

**Now, give yourself an A-B-C test with a potential client or for your own film or video project. These basic concepts are the most critical aspects of creating a successful presentation.**

*“Nothing is particularly hard if you divide them into small jobs.”*

Henry Ford

# 5

## **Production Steps to Success**

The Basic Flow and Steps  
of Producing a Video

## Basic Flow for Producing a Video

Producing a video can be as simple as using one camera to document a speech or event or it may be a million dollar project which includes hundreds of people and thousands of man hours of production. No matter what the complexity, producing a video includes, but is not limited to, the following phases:

### 1. PLANNING

Concepts Meeting:	Go over chapters 1 and 2
Research:	Polls, competition, image, etc.
Conceptual Flow:	Signed-off by the client
Script & Storyboard:	Storyboard in writing. <i>(Illustrated storyboards are provided for most high-end agency work)</i>
Final Edited Script:	Signed-off by the client
Casting and Legal:	Release forms
Schedule:	Shoot Log, Dates, etc.

### 2. PRODUCTION

Assembly of Resources:	
Fabrication:	Props, Sets, Costumes, etc.
Video Shoots:	Location, Studio
Music:	Creation or Selection
Narration:	Audio Studio
Paper Edit:	If necessary, from window dubs

### 3. POST PRODUCTION

Custom Video Graphics
Editing
Packaging
Review
Master Final Edited Copy—File
Video Duplication or Presentation

Here are a few subtopics which may be added to planning, production, and postproduction (renting equipment, design of video jacket and labels, the creation of custom music and sound effects, special illustrations for custom titles and graphics, dollies or a steady-cam, etc.). The above topics expand to meet the complexity of the presentation.

## Planning Approval Stages

Once you have picked the best production company for your task (see Chapter 6—next) and have given them the appropriate deposit then you are ready to begin.

### 1. Conceptual Flow

After your initial meeting the **AIM** should be well defined. Your **AUDIENCE** should be profiled with definite clarity, and the **APPROACH** should be discussed to offer the most effective impact on your audience. Out of these efforts should emerge a CONCEPTUAL FLOW. The conceptual flow should cover the **Basics Elements for a Powerful Video** (pages 29 and 30). Your approval of these factors should be acknowledged in writing, and indicate that all parties clearly understand the expectations of the undertaking at hand.

### 2. Script & Scripted Story Board

The next step is to translate the conceptual flow into a script. The script is the most important element in the process; a good script will give birth to a successful video while a poor or even bad script utilizing the best actors in Hollywood will result in a bomb. Along with the script should be a "Scripted Story Board" which is a written description of the visuals located to the right of the script (not drawings). This is the most critical aspect of the video project since all production and post production are completely dependent on the video script. The client should be *absolutely sure* the script is exactly what he or she wants before proceeding. Changing one's mind later is costly in every sense.

Once all principals have agreed on the script, acknowledge your approval in writing. You have accomplished the most important aspect of producing an effective and powerful video. So, an acknowledgment in writing means serious business. It also signifies that any future changes in the script means a change in the negotiated price of the project.

### **3. Production Scheduling**

A production schedule should be created, even if it is a very simple list of shooting dates and a tentative video due date. Often clients do not schedule well or prepare ahead and the production company must change shooting schedules. Such changes, particularly short notice changes, have a considerable impact on finances and meeting the production schedule. Realize the impact and the cost of changes.

*“whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant.”*

Bible Mark 10:43

# 6

## **How to Choose the Best Production Company**

What to Look For and  
the Right Questions to Ask



## What to Look For... The Right Questions To Ask!

### *Don't Believe Everything You Hear*

#### **Look at their work and be critical.**

*Do you like their work? Does it have impact?  
Is it informative?*

#### **Look at their work and be critical.**

*Do you believe they are able to create the content and image  
you require? Can they meet your objectives?*

#### **Look at their work and be critical.**

*Make sure the demo you view represents the real work of the  
crew who will produce for you. If you have any doubts  
**check references!!!***

Follow your own feelings about **the impact, believability** and **communication strength** concerning the video production company's products, key personnel and ability to serve you. Be sure to utilize the information in this book in order to approach your project with the basic knowledge of what a successful video project contains. Remember, producer/directors are like artists. Some utilize animation, some fine art, while others create with humor or drama. Find a comfortable fit. There are creative directors who can knock you off your seat with artistic "bells and whistles" and yet they may entirely miscommunicate the facts necessary to move your audience to act. Likewise, a programmatic approach without market friendly images and flair may bore your audience. Do your research! Look, listen and feel the work of the production company you are considering.

**DO NOT always judge by price.** Decide what type of video you **must** have to meet your minimum requirements, then choose a producer who will easily meet your minimum standard. Choose a production group that possesses the necessary talent to achieve your desired results. **Beware of the agency who finds it necessary to shoot 20 hours of footage from which they expect to choose only five**

**minutes.** Although this might be applicable when producing a documentary, it is usually inexperience or an excuse to extend your budget. Know where you are going in order to save time and money; and at the same time, produce a more effective video. A **"You Win Before You Begin"** approach works better than the hit and miss method.

A good video must contain information which directly relates to your audience. This information is gathered from research directly from you. The task of the producer and writer is to technically and artistically put this information into a visually attractive form while achieving the predetermined goals. In other words, it is a team effort. Beware of the creative team that does not look to you for research data, product knowledge, and your expert sales experience.

## **What to Expect from a Producer**

### **Will the producer/director maintain the proper corporate image and integrity?**

Your "image" is what people imagine you are, and what people imagine you do! You project an image (whether you are conscious of it or not), and that image is implanted in the mind of the beholder. That mental picture is a descriptive story of who you are and what you do. It may not be a "true" story of who you are and what you do, but it is projected immediately to your viewing audience. Make sure the integrity of your product and corporate image is defined clearly to the creative team in the initial planning and creative sessions.

### **"Your IMAGE is more important than REALITY because your IMAGE is REALITY to the observer."**

Your image immediately creates a feeling and belief system in the mind of the observer. What the observer sees and hears in your video presentation stimulates the brain to pull images (thoughts) from memory which create a composite picture of who the observer believes you are. These images create feelings about you. There are three basic dimensions to the image you create with video:

### **Visual Image**

The pictures that flash by, the product packaging, and the people that appear on the screen (their hair, clothes, facial expression, body language, age, male or female, eyes, teeth, smile, ethnic mix, the actual set, its style, colors, etc....) stimulate the viewers to think about what those images represent and mean to them. This will produce the result as discussed in chapter 3.0.

### **Audio Image**

How the narrator speaks, the tone of his or her voice, the descriptive phrases, the attitude of delivery (negative, positive, strong, critical, nice, harsh, confident, secure, insecure, insincere, patronizing, nurturing, humorous or serious, etc.) is as important as the visual image. In fact, George Lucas believes that the "sound is half of the picture". Music is also more important than you might imagine. While only 5% to 10% of what is spoken is recalled, music (jazz, rock, reggae, classical, new age, rap, opera, easy listening) creates an indelible impression that represents who you are to your audience. The choice of a melody and style—instrumental or vocal—projects feelings that will stay with the listener long after your video ends. A successful jingle may be remembered for decades after the visual from whence it came is totally forgotten. Match your choice with your demographics. Match your choice with your message and image.

### **Emotional Image**

The composite of your presentation (industrious, honest, motivated, exciting, innovative, sensual, caring, futuristic, neurotic, established, spiritual) will convey an emotional image. Hopefully, you have pre-designed your presentation to accomplish your AIM and ACTION. As you develop your script, select your spokesperson, score your music themes, and choose your scenic properties, make sure they consistently present an image that delivers emotional impact—the emotional impact you desire. Don't send MIXED messages.

The image you emote will create feelings of credibility, desire, trust, etc. (or lack of each). The feelings you create will determine your future success or possible failure. **Image** is what people "think you are".

Can and will the producer maintain or strengthen your corporate image? The "power of image" is often not calculated. Good images are like tickets. If you have the ticket you get into the game. Consider how many salespeople never reach the decision makers who might purchase their wares because a receptionist does not like the way he or she looks and/or what he or she projects. **First impressions are lasting ones! It is difficult to recreate a public image gone awry.** Consider: Dan Quayle, Richard Nixon, Tonya Harding and O.J. Simpson.

#### **Consider Your Corporate Image:**

Will the image of the video convey what you are and/or what you want to be? Is it COHESIVE? That is, is the final product logically consistent with your printed materials? Will all the media you produce convey what you wish to express? You may ask "Why develop a cohesive image?" First and foremost, it costs money—lots of money—every time you change your image. Corporate communiqué's should carry a consistent image. This will enforce and reinforce an impression you wish to imprint on the minds of your customers and potential customers efficiently. Every piece of media that presents a different image means you are re-educating the buyer. Assume your present image is working. If you are looking for change or to define your new product, services or goals, **be deliberate about choosing an image.** Be sure to maintain that image that works for you in the market place. (i.e. "Coke is It!") Remember, your image is "who you *really* are" in the mind of the viewer.

In summary, know what you want to accomplish. Select a co-operative and creative production team in whom you have confidence. Now you are on your way to experiencing the exciting and rewarding process of producing a powerful video presentation!

*“Everybody has to be somebody to somebody  
to be anybody”*

Malcolm S. Forbes



**No One Person is a Team**  
Your Contribution to a Successful Video



2. **Do not change the schedule unless it is absolutely necessary!**

Unless death, illness, or disaster strikes, keep APPOINTMENTS! Time is money. Jot down the important deadlines and keep in mind vacation time for the decision makers:

**A. PLANNING**

Concepts Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_  
Research: \_\_\_\_\_  
Conceptual Flow: \_\_\_\_\_  
Script & Storyboard: \_\_\_\_\_

**B. PRODUCTION**

Assembly of Resources: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fabrication: \_\_\_\_\_  
Video Shoots: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Narration: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**C. POST PRODUCTION**

Editing \_\_\_\_\_  
Packaging \_\_\_\_\_  
Review \_\_\_\_\_  
Master Final \_\_\_\_\_  
Video Duplication \_\_\_\_\_  
Presentation Date: \_\_\_\_\_



#### **4.0 Pay on time.**

One of the most destructive practices in business is delaying payment. Pay on or very close to the day promised or expect it to affect the creative process. Never use the words "the check is in the mail". Do not undertake a project without having the available funds to see it through to completion.

#### **5.0 Execute the fundamentals of producing power video!!**

So many corporate executives do not know what they want, however they seem to know what they **DO NOT** want. Solve this problem before the script is signed off to avoid conflict, delays, and additional expenses. Your budget may limit some frills and expensive 3D graphics in your finished product, so be realistic. If you have chosen the right producer, you will usually be very happy with the results. Your finished project should be very effective provided you simply follow the steps in this **Quick Guide for Producing Powerful Video.**

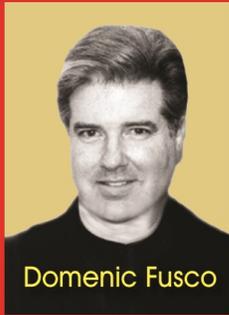
**REMEMBER: There is no "I" in Team!**

**There is no limit to what  
can be accomplished if you  
don't care who gets the credit!**

**Together Everyone Achieves More!**

## **Summary:**

*“You see God always takes the simplest way”*  
Albert Einstein



Domenic Fusco

You might call Domenic Fusco a "Renaissance Man". His educational background is as varied as his interests. He holds earned degrees in engineering (like Frank Capra) and theology (like Martin Scorsese), in addition to his natural and developed skills which have won him awards as a media producer, photographer, and author. Mr. Fusco is the founder and president of Image Artistry a video production company.

With expert skills and 30 years experience in engineering, sales, marketing, management, and media production, Mr. Fusco is a much sought after producer, director and speaker. His productions resume includes sports figures, religious and political leaders, entertainment personalities and major corporations around the world.

★★★★ "As a film critic, it is my job to make judgments on the quality of production and the breadth of creativity and substance in a film. If I were to give a rating, it would be four stars." Dr. Ted Baehr Film Critic and Author

## Partial Client List

Applebees  
Chevron  
L'OREAL  
C-SPAN  
HBO  
IBM  
CNN  
Azurix  
Nissan  
Ferrari  
ComAir  
UpJohn  
Lafarge  
Super Bowl  
Metro West  
Greenelefe  
Seven Eleven  
Poly Portables  
J. W. Messner  
Movie Guide  
Options Talent  
Life Time Cable  
Emory University  
Stirling Reality Int'l  
Stone Mountain Park  
Atlanta Apparel Mart



0 - 9 7 2 2 9 7 8 - 0 - 4