

TIPS FOR VIDEO CAPTURE

Collecting and editing stories and testimonials via webcams and smartphones has been a safe, fast, and impactful way for our clients to reach their audiences while keeping their distance. See below for a few tips from our AV savvy bees to help you create your own!

LIGHTS



May the source be with you

Before filming, make sure you are facing toward the main source of light in the area. Opt for natural light if you can. If the main source of light is behind you, your face and body will be covered by shadows. For example, if you're standing with a bright window at your back, turn around and face toward the window instead!



Check for glare

If you're wearing glasses, be sure to check if your light source is reflecting off your lenses. The easiest thing to do is to remove your glasses. Not an option? Raise your light source to reduce or eliminate the glare.



To ring light or not?

If you've got a ring light and your window access is spotty, give it a shot! These lights cast an even light, helping to reduce shadows on the face, giving your skin a smoother look and brightening your eyes. If you're planning on being in front of the camera a good bit, it may be worth the minor investment of \$20 to \$100+.

CAMERA



Grab a friend

If possible, when using a smartphone have somebody (with a steady hand and from a safe distance) film you. This allows for a more natural camera angle. Filming solo? Use a small phone tripod, or rig a secure set-up like leaning your phone against a sturdy surface to ensure a smooth video capture.



Get oriented

Think about where your video is going to be seen, and pick the frame orientation that works best for your project. In general, horizontal filming is more commonly used and is easier to format it into more uses than filming with your phone upright (vertically).



Find your best framing

You'll capture your best angle if your camera is sitting just above eye-level. This will also promote good posture, helping you put your best foot forward!



Set yourself up for success-ful angles

Be cautious to not cut off your head or sides of your body with the camera frame. If you can't see your whole head in the frame, neither can we (or the camera). Aim to have your head in the top half of the frame, leaving room to add captions if needed.



Get your background in check

It's best to have a tidy background that won't distract from your message. Avoid distracting objects, complex patterns (for example, a houndstooth pattern can be dizzying on camera), and intense lighting (avoiding overexposure and scary shadows).

AUDIO



The great indoors

Recording outdoors is risky for audio. Unless you're super confident in your environment (and skills), or prepared to make multiple attempts when that noisy truck or cheerful bird decides to join your video shoot, stick to filming inside if possible to help control your outcome.



Sound check

If filming indoors, take a beat to check if there are any fans/HVAC units, appliances etc. that may be creating noise that you've grown used to. If they can't be turned off, then close as many doors in between the source of the sound and the room in which you are recording.



Get mic'd

If you think audio will be an ongoing hurdle, you can purchase an inexpensive (around \$15), small microphone that works with your smartphone, laptop and desktop. These can dramatically improve audio quality.

ACTION



Let your AV prowess reign

Allow yourself ample time to set up and make sure everything is running smoothly. Peace of mind in your AV will give you the confidence boost you need to focus on the connecting with your content and viewer.



Eye contact

When filming from a computer, avoid focusing on yourself in the webcam frame on screen. If eye contact is desired, look directly into the tiny camera source light. If you don't want to provide direct eye-contact, focus slightly to the side of the camera source.



Take five

Great performances take practice:) Give yourself time to do a full dress rehearsal. Once you're ready, and if time allows, record multiple takes and pick from the best material to edit down for the final content.

EDITING

File sizes and formats of self-recorded smartphone and webcam footage don't allow for a large amount of editing flexibility in terms of changing the overall look and sound of the original footage captured. Aim for your final product to be a cleaned up, color corrected, reframed and consolidated version.



Clean and clear

To give you a polished product, you can easily clean up your footage by looking for these minor audio mishaps: misspeaks, stutters, and background noise. Unfortunately, loud background sounds cannot be easily removed.



Be concise

To create an impactful video, streamline the dialogue and ensure a clear message by cutting down and consolidating the sound bites. Include your call to action at least once, or ideally at the beginning and end of your message.



Reframe

Aim for your final content to have consistent framing—keep an eye on what is entering and exiting the edges and corners of your screen. To keep this under control, you can often use the crop tool in your editing software.



Check your tints

Color correct your footage to remove any unsightly tints and hues, strengthening the overall look as much as possible.

