



non-profit video: 101

What keeps you up at night?

Well, for us it's how to get people to care about the good work our clients undertake. And with shrinking attention spans, over-saturated eyeballs and an ever-shifting Internet landscape, it's not a surprise that we don't get much sleep.

As our societies use of video continues to evolve, we too have to keep an eye on not just making things look pretty and sound clear, but on creating work that DOES something. As we grow our own understanding about what works and what doesn't, we've arrived at 5 fundamental questions every organization needs to address before embarking on a video-creating adventure. We look forward to exploring these with you!

1. Who is your audience?

Obvious, right? Many times the answer we hear is.. "our audience is, well... *everyone.*" It may be true that you'd like a single video to have the capability to reach a wide audience, but the better you can define who you're trying to reach, the more effective your video will be. A middle aged donor watches a video very differently than a teenage volunteer.

There is also a big difference between who you would *like* to see your video (very wealthy foundations and passionate advocates) and who you *can actually reach*. Remember, non-profit audiences are about quality, not quantity. You may not be able to get a million views, but if you can reach those 500 people who are on the edge about whether or not to donate, your video has a chance of making a difference. So, you want to ask yourself:

- Who do we currently communicate with?
- What is the typical age, gender, education etc. of folks interested in our work? Who donates?
- Where are we most likely to reach these audiences (see #4 for more on that)?

2. What do you want your viewers to do?

In an ideal world we would make a video so awesome that viewers would immediately quit their jobs, turn over their IRAs to you and start volunteering full time with your organization. Back on planet earth, we all know how hard it is to motivate potential donors and volunteers, let alone educate the public about your mission. That's why it's so important to think of **video as a tool**. If we can re-imagine video as a way to get people to DO something, we'll be able to start making it a really worthwhile investment. Consider these questions:

- Do you want this video to make someone A. Donate, B. Volunteer, or C. Learn more about your mission? (It can be all three, but it's most effective if we tackle one goal per video!)
- Are you making an explicit "ask" (is someone in the video directly asking the viewer to do something)?
- How are you directing people to find out more or otherwise get involved?
- How will you use this video as a tool? Will you package it with other material or use it in existing presentations?

3. Do you need a "brochure" or a "calling card"?

We've found that most non-profit videos can either fit the "brochure" or "calling card" models.

The "brochure": The primary goal of a "brochure" is to educate. It presupposes that the viewer is at least paying enough attention to absorb/care about the information. At its best a "brochure" video can activate or excite an already existing audience. It can give a name and a face to a problem and really provide some heart and soul to drier details.

The "calling card": The "calling card" has the hefty challenge of cutting through all of the noise to get your cause recognized. The goal here is to quickly and simply communicate **the idea & emotion** of your organization. Often the best "calling card" videos are able to capture the need that exists and the solution an organization offers in that precious time before a viewer clicks over to another window. These videos rarely provide the details of the organization, but instead aim to move the viewer enough to find out more.

Which kind of video do you want to make? Of course you can create a video that includes elements of both a "brochure" and a "calling card", but finding the balance between the two can not only produce a more focused video, but it can also help you figure out how to use the video once you're done.

4. Where will your video live?

We can't tell you how many times we make a video that gets put 17 pages into a clients website... lost for eternity. Sometimes we forget that **how the video is experienced** is almost as important as the content of video. When you start to ponder how & where a video is delivered, all sorts of important questions arise:

- Where will your video live?
- How can the video complement your existing material?
- Where will your video receive the most undivided attention?
- Where will your video be best positioned to allow viewers to donate or find out more information?

For more information on getting your video into the world see our guide: ***We made a great video.... now what?***

5. Are you telling a STORY? (one really good one)

This final question may seem painfully obvious, but it turns out to be the single most important factor in the creation of an effective video. Most organizations have so many wonderful and interesting components that the temptation is to lump together facts, data, images and details in the hopes that the viewer will wind up caring. But we've all seen these videos... and without a compelling narrative, it's doubtful we've taken much from them.

Stories are the most powerful way to get people to connect with social causes. That's not just based on years of watching movies and reading good books... it's also backed up by science. Social psychology has clearly shown that storytelling has the tremendous power to unlock empathy.

Professor Paul Slovic, researcher at University of Oregon, conducted one of our favorite studies that shows empathy levels jump way up when a story is told about a **single** hungry child rather than two children or a country of children or a set of statistics. Perhaps it's best that we let video do what it's best at and leave the details for other medium such as presentations, articles and annual reports.

This and other exciting research should lead us to ask:

- What is the story I want to tell?
- How can the story of a single client, partner or staff member illuminate our cause?
- How can we humanize the work we do through storytelling?

Visit us at www.goodeyevideo.com/strategy to learn more!