

Planning shows and writing scripts

Before you create a film or video project, it's helpful to organize your content and prepare for the process. Although none of these suggestions are specific to any one production, they'll help you polish your process and produce better videos with less work.

The three main outlines to begin with are:

- 1. Planning checklist**
- 2. Making a show outline**
- 3. Writing a script**

Planning checklist

Before you start creating your show, it's a good idea to do some planning.

- Determine the goal of the show. Take some time to think about what you want your show to say. Develop the message or objective until it's entirely clear. Keep the objective in mind as you develop your show.
- List the scenes. Make a list of all the scenes, in order of appearance, and the media or inputs you'll use for each. For example, if you are doing a sales show, you might want to include the following:
 1. Opening music
 2. Opening title slate and image
 3. Live video of the person announcing the product
 4. Product photo
 5. Video clip of someone using the product
 6. Microsoft PowerPoint slide listing benefits of the product
 7. Closing comments from salesperson
 8. Closing image and music
- Collect your assets. Create or collect any assets you need, such as PowerPoint slides, actors, images, and so on.

Making a show outline

An outline is a great way to communicate your vision of the film or video, keep track of the pieces, and make sure every detail is assigned to someone.

Here's an outline for the Gravity project, a sample to see the workflow.

Scene description	Media	Video effect	Responsible party
Opening title: "Gravity and You," with background music	Intro music	Dissolve	John
	Title graphic		Jill
Live video of Mark reading scrip	Camera 1: Mark	Dissolve	Emily and John on script
	Microphone		Jill on camera setup
Transition to picture of Sir Isaac as Mark continues reading	Image file of Isaac	OTS Kid Power	Suzy
		GoldFramed_TV Tumble In	
PowerPoint slide of gravity formula	PowerPoint slide	Upper	Mark
		Left	

Consider the following issues when you create your outline:

- Describe what happens in each scene. Scene descriptions help each team member know how exactly his or her contribution fits into the larger project.
- Create a quick sketch of your scenes. The images in your show are arguably more important than the words in your script. Whether you use the images that you shoot and edit or decide to create your own, sketching out a quick storyboard gives you a preview of how the scenes in your video will flow.
- Make a list of what you'll need. After the basic scenes have been framed out, create a list of assets you need for each scene.
- Assign tasks and responsibilities. If two or more people will share a task, designate one of them to make final decisions.

Writing a script

When you write your script, keep the following issues in mind:

- Know your audience. Understanding your audience helps you manage the tone and level of detail for the presentation. Be sure that the general vocabulary and topic-specific terminology is appropriate for your intended audience.
- Keep it simple. Always be clear and concise in your presentation. Write your script so that information flows smoothly from one topic to the next. Don't spend too much time on a topic--the average TV news story is only about a minute long. Think about where you can insert images, video effects, and other visual elements to illustrate what's being said and keep things interesting.
- Leverage the power of the medium. Video delivers information, but it's really effective at conveying emotion and a sense of mood. Video can have more intellectual and emotional impact than text, but to gain this impact you must distill your message to its most essential points. The biggest mistake in many videos, especially corporate and educational videos, is that they contain too much detail.

Although your audience may have varying levels of knowledge, education, and sophistication regarding your subject, almost everyone is an expert at watching TV and has expectations about how it should look. Watch some television shows and analyze them to get ideas about the pacing and content for creating your video.

- Create small chunks. If you have a very long video, break the content up into chapters or segments. Delivering too much information in an unbroken stretch can cause your audience to lose interest. You can use in a DVD solution the use of Chapter Markers to provide easy access to the sections.

This is just but a guide and is use quite extensively throughout the media and production facilities of today.

Please ask us at anytime if you need any assistance.

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