

New to Video Production?

So you're ready to use video to promote your company, liven up your website, provide visual aids to salespeople, advertise your products, or train your employees.

Maybe you're an individual with a unique skill and want to make a training video to sell to others. Or you may simply be hosting an event and want to provide DVDs to your attendees or resell them to your industry.

As you can see, video has so many multiple uses for effective communication, but one weak link in the production process can be a disaster. Make sure the production company you choose has the following qualities:



what **YOU** need to know



PROVIDE ASSISTANCE WITH DISTRIBUTING YOUR VIDEO

In today's market, you need more than just a finished video. You need to be able to market the video, distribute it, duplicate it, package it, price it, stream it, retail it, and more. Your producer should be knowledgeable about other forms of technology and marketing, especially web/internet streaming and delivery. Not that they need to provide these services to you directly, in fact outsourcing much of this will often give you better rates and options. But your video agency must advise you on your options to get your video in front of your audience's eyes. If the producer barely knows how to send an email attachment and their website looks like something they put together in Microsoft Word, chances are they may not be able to assist you with harnessing other technology to help take your video beyond the cutting room floor.

Return Phone Calls and Emails Within 24 Hours

This is basic common sense business that you think would be a given, but it's not. Especially within a creative industry with odd schedules, video producers have to make prompt communication a priority, otherwise it can easily fall by the wayside. If you call a prospective company for a quote and they don't return your voicemail within 24 hours, it'll only be worse once you're a client. Although, if you don't get a response to an email within 24 hours, be sure to call just in case the email didn't get through.

EVERYTHING IN WRITING

Creative services are naturally prone to subjectivity, resulting in big mistakes and misunderstandings when everything is done on a handshake. Try to get a contract with an itemized list of everything that will be included, and how the end video will look.



DO A FAVOR WITHOUT NICKEL AND DIMING YOU

Even if you can get every last detail in writing, often times your vision for the video will blossom once the production process gets your creative juices flowing. Or you may find that your preferences changed after a rough draft of the script. In all fairness to the producer, large modifications or significant changes of direction will need to be quoted separately and additionally. But a tweak here and there never hurt anybody's bottom line, so a little generosity on their part will help you feel like you're getting the best value for your money.

your vision and goals should be paramount

Creative input from the producer is helpful and should be seriously considered, but you know your business and industry the best. Some video producers take it personally when you don't like their ideas or suggestions. During the consultation if they're pushy with their ideas and not really listening to what you say, it may not be a good fit.

THEIR DEMO REEL MUST PROVE THEY KNOW HOW TO COMMUNICATE

A portfolio will be the biggest demonstration of the video producer's abilities. If it's just a bunch of random clips strewn together, all that shows you is that they know how to run a video camera. Good footage must be supported by target audience analysis, impeccable scriptwriting, voice talent, music selection, and proper edits if it is to communicate successfully.

THE STUDIO SHOULD HAVE EXPERIENCE IN YOUR INDUSTRY

A producer that primarily has served the entertainment industry many not necessarily translate into the best producer for corporate communications. A producer that focuses on the medical community may not be the best fit if you're a manufacturing company. The more industries represented in a producer's client list, the more versatile and flexible they can be to adjust to your situation.

YOU SHOULD BE OFFERED THE BEST VIDEO FOR YOU BUDGET

Video image quality is important, but not the sole factor of successful video communication. You no longer need to hire a 100,000 square foot West End studio to get a responsive, broadcast quality video. It's not 1983 anymore.



Many studios feel that anything less than the top of the line cameras, lenses, accessories, software, gadgets, etc., will yield an inferior project. So they won't even consider offering medium-grade options that would be far more affordable yet indistinguishable to the untrained eye. Communication principles are paramount for a successful video, and can be accomplished just as effectively with mid-grade equipment. In fact, today's mid-grade equipment often outperforms yesterday's top of the line!



YOU ARE THEIR ONLY CLIENT

Or at least, you should feel and be treated like you're their only client. Whether you're spending a little or a lot, you should feel like a Fortune 500 company.

