

# How to Create Your Own Promotional Video

By Ian Harvey, creator of BioView, AlmostFamous & the Let's Do It web engine.

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We live in a world of sound bytes and video clips. And we work in a visual industry. Time starved potential clients who don't know you want to see you in action before they will hire you. This means you must have a promotional video that does what is possible to show your style and content to potential buyers.

This report has been prepared by Ian Harvey to help you get the best bang for your buck when it comes to creating your own promotional videos.

When it comes to promotional video should you do it yourself, or should you hire professionals to do it?

That depends on what you want to achieve. I have seen DIY videos that rival any professional videos on a technical level and ones that outshine professional videos when it comes to selling the product – the presenter.

No matter which way you choose there are a few fundamentals that need to be covered. Below we deal with equipment needed, shooting tips, video types, editing and uploading to the web.

## Professional Shooting

If you have the money, you should always consider using professional cameramen to shoot your presentations. However, unless you have a reason for shooting the entire presentation (which should only be considered if you plan to make a saleable product out of this shoot) only hire a single cameraman. Multi camera angles are still available from one camera because he keeps moving around. This will be considerably less in cost to a multi camera shoot and a mixing desk which the professionals will try and sell you on.

## DIY Shooting

At any one presentation you may only be looking for 20-30 seconds of material you can use in your promo video. It is very easy to simply set someone up in the audience to do a few recordings from different angles. It's just a case of having a camera available to catch that 'magic' that happens from time to time. You may discard all the footage or you may just find that gem that you were looking for.

## Professional editing

Professionals will always create a great technical product. You can expect to pay between \$1000 and \$2000 per finished minute of video. So a 4 minute video can cost between \$4000 and \$8000. Then you will need to have the same company involved in any future updates (which happen more often than you may think) in order to maintain continuity and also because they own the copyright to the edit.

The biggest problem I find with professional editing is that they often do not understand what will sell you and end up creating a masterpiece that will not promote you well.

## DIY Editing

Obviously you can save a lot by doing it yourself (or using a service like BioView who make their main income from distribution not editing) but you do need to follow a few simple rules.

It is you that is being judged not the quality of your footage. Of course you need to avoid including obviously bad footage but we are not trying to film 'The Titanic' here.

You can update without cost and at any time and you have the right to do so since you own the copyright in the edit.

OK, if you are going to consider doing it yourself what do you need?

## Equipment needed

### Hard Drive Camera

A good handheld Hard Drive camcorder like the Sony DCRSR67 (\$829.00). I don't recommend buying a high definition camera unless you have software that can edit HD footage.

The quality from a standard definition camera is still very good when delivered over the web. I recommend hard drive because they create clips that are easy to download to your computer. Just plug the camera into a usb port on your computer and your computer will see the camera as another storage device.

Make sure that the camera saves to a format that you can easily edit. Sony create mpg files which are excellent for editing. They are smaller files and easily manipulated by the editing software.

### **Microphone**

The best microphone I have found is a Bluetooth microphone from Sony (ECMHW2). This unit, although expensive, is ideally suited for a presenters needs. It has a wireless microphone which the presenter wears and a unit that fits onto the top of the camera. It can pick up the presenter from up to 100metres away and can record in 5.1 channel surround sound which means you will get the ambient sound as well (like an audience laughing).

As far as I am aware this is only available for Sony cameras.

### **Tripod**

These are inexpensive and you should just make sure you get one with a good height (at least 1.5m)

Now we are ready to shoot some footage. Let's do it!

### **Simple shooting tips**

- Always take a camcorder with you to any engagement
- Ask someone to take random clips (The MC is a good person to ask)
- Shoot in short bursts 1 to 2 minutes each (makes editing easier)
- Move around the room. Look for interesting angles (from side, back, in the audience)
- Use a tripod or steady yourself against a wall etc.
- Shoot long shots with audience and presenter
- Be aware of the lighting (avoid back lit shots)
- Shoot panning shots from presenter to the audience and from audience to presenter.
- Record some close up shots

- Do not use the zoom (this can be done more effectively in the editing.
- Use a remote microphone if possible

## **Vox Pops (( Voice of the People)**

You have more credibility when other people say nice things about you. These video testimonials are called vox pops and are simple to get.

Here's how you get them.

Have someone else with the camera simply approach a number of people and ask "Can you give me 3 seconds on (insert your name here)'s presentation?"

Do not have them ask any other questions. The aim of the game is to get as many people saying "*That was the best thing since sliced bread*". The more vox pops you ask for, the more you will get. Be quick with it. If a person says no just move on. If you pick up 20 you will have 6 or 7 that you can use.

So what are we going to do with all that footage? Let's make a movie!

## **Planning your videos**

SO now you have a bunch of clips and you are about to load them There are a number of different videos that you should consider creating.

### **Type 1 - Style**

The first is what I call your 'Style' or 'Promo' video. This video shows viewers your presenting style. It does not deal with content and should be no longer than 4 minutes. It should show a number of clips from different engagements that show you interacting with your audience. This may also show a number of vox pops and written testimonials.

Since you are not dealing with content you do not need to have a logical flow in the audio. It also means that you can update your content without having to worry about this video.

You can see a sample of the Style Video by looking at this link

<http://www.globalspeakers.com.au/BVDisplay.htm?&=AB915035>

### **Type 2 – Content**

The second type of video I call your 'Content' and is a very simple video to create. The 'Content' video deals with your subject matter and needs only be a face to camera shoot of yourself explaining about your particular keynotes (one video for each). These need be only 60-90 seconds long.

Set a camera on a tripod framing yourself from about your waist up and slightly to the side (so that you can edit in the title of your keynote if you want to) and simple answer the following questions about your keynote:

- What is the name of the keynote
- Who is it for? (Salespeople, Managers etc.)
- What are the main points?
- What is the duration (45 minute keynote or ½ day training etc.)?
- What are the outcomes?

Simple shoot yourself talking to the camera in a relaxed fashion and you are done.

### **Type 3 - Testimonials**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> type of video is for additional testimonials. As you collect more vox pops you can easily edit them into a collection of clips. This will save you from constantly updating your promo video which is the more complex of all these videos to put together.

### **Type 4 – Full Presentation**

A full presentation video is still possible on a budget. Recently BioView created a two camera shoot of Amanda Gore's new presentation called "Changing Lives" at a showcase event. You can see this by going to her profile on any of the Bureau sites

Here's one <http://www.globalspeakers.com.au/BVDisplay.htm?&=AB9F2FBA>

This shoot was done with both cameras shooting the entire presentation then edited on the multi camera option on Sony Vegas Pro 9 software.

However I am not convinced of the value of having a full presentation available for viewing. It's a bit like the movies. When you see the shorts at the movies promoting coming attractions they are exactly that – shorts. They usually show only the really good bits and you are left feeling that you would like to see that movie.

With modern streaming technologies it is not difficult to deliver a full presentation. I just wonder at the value of doing so.

Ok now we know what we want to do. How do we do it?

## Editing

There are a number of software options that are free and possibly already on your computer. On the PC you can use Microsoft MovieMaker for Windows which comes free on your system and on the Apple there is iMovie the free movie editing software.

I personally use Sony Vegas Pro 9 and that is a top end product without a high price.

If you want any advice on how to use the video editing software simply go to [youtube.com](http://youtube.com) and enter the name of your software package. You will find a number of tutorials that will explain how to use it.

Here are a few things worth thinking about when creating your 'Style' or 'Promo' video:

- Maximum length 4 minutes.
- Do not use more than a few transition effects. A transition is how you move from one clip to another. I recommend 'dissolve' as the best one to use.
- Make sure you use a font size larger than 18 point so that when it plays on a smaller website delivery it will still be readable.
- Keep the interest level up. Each point should either create a question or establish a point.
- Try to resist playing with the special effects too much. Having you rasterise into psychedelic colours or warp all over the place, if not representative of what you do on stage, should be avoided.
- Add vox pops throughout the video. They are an ideal transition between clips. If you don't have enough clips you may consider using a written testimonial in a credit roll type effect. Just make sure that the font size is no smaller than 18 point and there are not too many words.
- Keep it simple.

OK now our video is done. What do we do with it?

Once upon a time, a long long time ago, you would burn a DVD and send copies off to the Bureaus and/or clients. That is so last week. Now we have the web and that is the way to distribute now. Lets Do It!

## Getting it onto the web

There are a number of places you can put your video so that it will work for you. Here are just a few.

### YouTube and other video sharing sites

#### The Up side of YouTube

- YouTube is free
- It will give you some exposure around the world.
- You can upload as many sub 10 minute videos as you like.
- You can also embed a YouTube video into your own site.

#### The Downside of YouTube

- You will find yourself buried among millions of other videos vying for the same spot
- When your video finishes it is quite likely that YouTube will display other 'related videos' to the visitor. These could be your competitors video or, as I have seen on one presenters site, a snuff movie.
- Youtube inserts a link that encourages the viewer to look around the YouTube site
- Some corporate clients ban employees from looking at YouTube. So you might be excluding some of your market.

### BioView

BioView is a delivery service that inserts your video (and other marketing and promotional material) into 30 Australian and NZ Bureau websites. If you want the best chance of getting business from Bureaus you should consider BioView. However it is only for Presenters who are already charging \$2500 and above and who understand the way that Bureaus work and are prepared to work to establish and maintain a relationship with them.

#### The Up Side of BioView

- Your promotional material is delivered into more than 30 Bureau websites.
- The referring website (be it yours or a Bureaus) does not lose control of the visitor.
- Can hold multi videos (related videos are only ever yours)
- Protects the Bureaus interest and makes it easy for them to sell you.
- Allows you to contact the Bureau Consultants directly or by personalized email
- Provides full details, including fee structure, to the Bureaus.

### The downside of BioView

- It costs more than YouTube. The cost is \$440.00 per year or the equivalent of \$1.50 per month per Bureau site.
- That's it! There ain't no more downside.

### **AlmostFamous.com.au**

AlmostFamous.com.au is a matching site that will match Presenters with events. It is designed for presenters who are willing to charge less than \$2000 per engagement. Your profile is uploaded to AlmostFamous.com.au and when the client puts up an event on the site you will be sent an invitation to propose for it. AlmostFamous.com.au can contain an embedded YouTube video.

### The Up Side of AlmostFamous.com.au

- It will find more jobs than you can and you will be invited to submit a prop.
- You will know everything about the job except the name of the client.
- It costs you far less than you would normally have to spend to put yourself in front of the client (49.00).
- This fee is an introduction fee only. Once you establish a connection with the client there is no ongoing payment required from you.

### The Down Side of AlmostFamous.com.au

- There is an annual fee of \$125.00 to register
- Each proposal you want to go for will cost \$49.00
- This only guarantees that your profile will be seen by the client. What they do with it is up to them.

### **Your own Website**

A modern website should allow you to upload and display your video and any other multimedia you wish to add to it.

If yours can't then it is time to consider upgrading. For a sample of how a modern website might display video check out this link [www.ianharvey.com.au](http://www.ianharvey.com.au)

With the Lets Do It web engine you can easily upload your video to your site so long as it is converted into a flash animation. This ensures that it can get through firewalls and is small in size.

To check out the details of this engine visit [www.letsdoit.net.au](http://www.letsdoit.net.au)

## Glossary

### Analogue

This is an electrical signal using continuously varying electrical voltages. Analogue video that is copied or edited several times suffers from generation loss much like a photocopy of a photocopy gets worse at each reproduction.

### Aspect Ratio

Proportional height and width of picture on screen. The current standard for conventional television sets is 4:3 or 16:9 for widescreen.

### AVI

AVI stands for Audio Video Interleaved. AVI format files are common on PCs for storing video. There is not much in the way of compression however so avi files are not much good for the web.

### BMP

Bitmap. A common file format for storing still images.

### Capture

The process of transferring a digital video from a camcorder to the computer.

### CCD

The Charged –Coupled Device, which converts the optical image into digital data on a camcorder. Home camcorders have one CCD unit for all of the primary colours. (red, green and blue) Professional cameras have 3, one for each of the colours.

### Clips

Component parts of a movie project, may consist of:

- ✓ Digitized video.
- ✓ Still photographs.
- ✓ Audio.
- ✓ Graphics.
- ✓ Titles.

### CODEC

Part of a media file (video, audio) that stands for COmpressor DECompressor. The CODEC makes the file smaller but must also be present on the computer for the video to playback.

**Cut**

The effect when two clips, either on the same or on different tracks, are butted together without overlap or transition..

**Digital Video**

Video format that stores a series of data representing the individual pixels of a screen.

**Depth of Field**

The area in which all objects located at different distances from the camera appear in focus.

**DV**

An abbreviation of Digital Video. DV is used to describe equipment that use the standard DV cassette. It is also used to describe the raw video data that is captured from these devices by a computer.

**DVD**

Digital Versatile Disc. This is an optical disc capable of storing 4.7GB of computer data. Used to store digital video movies for playback on a DVD player.

**DVD-R/DVD+R**

Two types of DVD recordable discs that can be written to using the appropriate DVD recorder.

**Editing**

The process of selecting, cutting and placing video footage in order to create a movie. Also includes adding sound tracks, titles and transitions.

**Fade**

To have a clip come into view (fade in) or go out of view gradually (fade out).

**Flicker**

The appearance of a flicker, flashing, or unsteadiness in an image on a display screen. A flicker issue can occur when the video refresh rate is too low, other video related issues and in some cases hardware issues with the monitor. Commonly when this type of issue occurs viewers will experience more eye strain.

**Frame Rate**

The number of still images that are played in a second to create a moving picture. PAL has a frame rate of 25 FPS (frames per second) whereas NTSC has a frame rate of 29.7 FPS.

**IEEE1394/ AKA Firewire or iLink**

A cable and socket system that camcorders and computers use to transfer digital video. The current rate is 400Mb per second.

**Jaggies**

Term used to describe a rigid non-straight line or edge of a image or graphic. Jaggies are commonly seen when zooming in on an image or on a low quality or resolution image. See also pixelated.

**MPG**

Widely-used video codec used by most computers to display a video. MPEG compression is capable of being handled through the software and/or hardware. There are various versions of MPEG. such as MPEG-1, MPEG-2, MPEG-4, MPEG-7, and MPEG-21.

**NTSC**

Short for National Television System Committee, NTSC is the United States committee responsible for creating technological television and video standards, including refresh rate and colour capabilities.

NTSC Composite Video is the standard for analogue colour televisions in the United States of America.

When configuring a desktop computer or laptop computer to connect to an external video source such as a TV or a projector, users in the United States should configure the video and/or BIOS for NTSC as the external video or video source. Users outside the United States should select the PAL option.

**Noninterlaced**

When referring to a computer monitor noninterlacing is a method of how an image on a computer monitor is refreshed.

With noninterlaced every line on the monitor is refreshed during a scan. This provides for a higher quality display and less chance of noticing flickering or line movements on the monitor.

When considering between a interlaced and a noninterlaced monitor, a noninterlaced monitor is commonly recommended.

**PAL**

An acronym for Phase Alternating Line. This is the standard for television sets in UK, some parts of Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

**Pixel**

Shorthand for Picture Element. The smallest rectangle of colour on a screen. Many of which are used to create a picture or a single frame on a video.

**Pixelated**

When the pixels on a picture are enlarged so that the naked eye sees a jagged edge on the picture. See also jaggies.

**Resolution**

The number of pixels that an image has. PAL video has a resolution of 720 x 576 and NTSC has a resolution of 720 x 480.

**RGB**

Short for Red-Green-Blue, RGB is a method of creating colours from the primary colours of red, green, and blue. RGB is sometimes used when describing a type of display or monitor.

**Sound Bite**

A small edited audio track.

**SVGA**

Short for Super Video Graphics Array, SVGA is a set of video standards that is one step above VGA. SVGA monitors are capable of displaying up to 16 million colors with a resolution of 800 x 600 on 14" monitors or up to a 1200 x 1600 resolution on a 20" monitor.

**Transition**

The visual effect used to change the screen from one image to another.

This may be as simple as a *cut*, or may be as complex as a moving pattern containing one image which is replaced by a second pattern containing the second image.

**VCD**

Video Compact Disc. This is a format for recording video to a CD (not a DVD, so you don't need a DVD burner). Videos recorded in VCD format will play on computers and in DVD players.

**WAV**

Windows Audio Volume is a common sound file format that uses very little compression.

**Zoom**

To change the focal length of a variable focal length lens.

**Zooming-In.**

To increase the focal length and thereby make the subject appear bigger and closer.

### **Zooming-Out.**

To decrease the focal length and thereby make the subject appear smaller and farther away.

### **The Author of this report**



This report was prepared by Ian Harvey

Ian Harvey has been playing with computers since 1979, has written commercial software and now spends much of his time further developing his 3 pet projects BioView, AlmostFamous.com.au and the Let's Do It Web Engine.

He has also been a professional Speaker since 1991. His interest in video production began in 2001 when he needed to create promotional material. Being a Kiwi he is heavily into DIY and this interest level lead to a number of innovations in production and delivery.

If you have specific questions please call Ian on **+61 7 5571 5335** or email him at **ian@letsdoit.net.au**

You can also have a look at the services offered from Let's Do It on the following websites

[www.Bioviewusa.com](http://www.Bioviewusa.com)   [www.almostfamous.com.au](http://www.almostfamous.com.au)   [www.letsdoit.net.au](http://www.letsdoit.net.au)