12
PURPOSE BEFORE PURSUIT
Has engagement become a task of mythic proportions? Associations can break through the content clutter by gaining a deeper understanding of what matters most to members.
BY THOMAS MARCETTI

20
SECRETS TO SUPER-SUCCESSFUL VIDEO
Video production doesn’t require a large staff or budget. The key to creating a compelling video is capturing emotion and understanding how to tell stories in a script-like way.
BY SUSAN BOSWELL

26
REDESIGN VS. REIMAGINING: WHAT DO YOU REALLY NEED?
To make the right changes at the right time, you need to step back from the publication and look at the bigger picture.
BY DANI GUDAKUNST

34
SUCCEEDING IN AN ERA OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS
If you haven’t found yourself embroiled in a politically charged conversation about something seemingly afield from the core of the profession you represent — chances are it won’t be long. It’s part of a bigger-picture shift.
BY JAMES E. MEYERS
A Cover of Mythic Proportions
This cover makes a quick connection with content producers who, like Sisyphus, struggle with the same task every day.

Keynote Speakers
Annual Meeting Sponsors
Schedule of Events
AM&P 360 Exhibitors
Video production doesn’t require a large staff or budget. The key to creating a compelling video is capturing emotion and understanding how to tell stories in a script-like way.
where good impressions are measured in seconds, associations continually turn to video as a valuable tool for capturing the minds and hearts of their membership.

Video has moved to the front and center as a communications strategy in many associations with the increasing use of social media as a content platform. “Our storytelling skills have to be diverse for the ever-changing behaviors of our audience,” says Alan English, vice president of communications for the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). “Video helps us be relevant in social media and in all the places members go online.”

Organizations are also finding a myriad use for their videos, from being the centerpiece of a communications, fundraising, or outreach campaign to illustrating an annual report or providing a message from leadership. When there is news to share, a complex topic to illustrate, or an emotional appeal, associations are increasingly turning to video to tell the story in a way that quickly captures the attention of their audience. Video is also proving to be a versatile medium, with associations producing commercial quality videos that are a year in the making as well as Facebook videos that can be turned around within a few days — and everything in between.

CROWDSOURCING CONTENT

One of the biggest challenges to video production is the perceived barriers to entry with the need for cameras, editing software, staff time and knowledge, and sharing large files — but it doesn’t have to be that way. New options have emerged to create videos without any of these tools. Tech company Gather Voices, for example, puts videography into the hands of everyone by crowdsourcing video content to create powerful video stories with member voices.

“It’s about an organization not just making content about an event, but actually starting to share a little bit more about who they are and what they do by humanizing their mission,” says Joel Resnik, who cofounded Gather Voices. “The goal is for association staff to connect with volunteers and members to create a diversification of voices. People feel they have a stronger role in the association when they help create a video.”

The two-year-old Gather Voices company uses a proprietary platform that makes user-generated videos easier to create, collect, manage, and publish. As-
Associations use the platform to create a call for videos, outline the type of footage they seek, and share this request with members via email or social media. Members use the software to take footage with their mobile phones, tablets, or desktop computers. As the videos are uploaded, staff can view them in real time to edit and combine the footage into a video and then publish the final product on their website or social media channels within a short period of time. For conferences and events, where background noise and lighting can pose challenges for videography, a kiosk can be placed in front of a step-and-repeat banner, scenic spot, or near a stage to capture short videos.

Audiences value authentic videos and find them trustworthy, Resnik says, and associations are developing a wide range of applications for crowd-sourced content. The Waterkeeper Alliance collected video stories from dozens of chapters nationwide at its local SPLASH events, and the Society of Women Engineers used a kiosk to capture more than 50 videos at its conference, forming a video library that could be used all year long.

**Lights, Camera, Action**

For organizations that want to produce their own videos, Emily Limon, vice president of communications for the Masons of California, noted that it’s become much easier in the past several years to create high-quality videos with the proliferation of resources that provide stock video footage and identify professional voice-over talent.

Video production doesn’t require a large staff or budget. The key to creating a compelling video is knowledge of the association’s members and the issues they care about and the ability to do storytelling in a script-like way. When the Masons of California embarked on a major development campaign to raise $7 million for masonic homes and education, staff tapped into the Freemasons’ spirit of volunteerism and desire to make the world a better place in developing the award-winning video series, “Make a Profound Impact” ([https://youtu.be/neiV6SG6nck](https://youtu.be/neiV6SG6nck)). Two staff are primarily responsible for video creation, filming B-roll at designated locations throughout the year, and procuring voiceovers and music.

The script is the foundation, Limon says. Inspired by material they found on YouTube, staff wrote a script and later hired a content producer to serve as the video editor. “We needed to have that heartstring pull, and it really is the message and the script that are key,” Limon says.

This quickly became evident when the video was shown at annual member retreats. “You could feel the emotional tenor in the room change,” Limon says. “That’s how we knew the video was a success.” The video was uploaded to the association’s YouTube channel, distributed on their website and via email, and played at local Masonic lodges, where

**Tools for Video Production**

**Voiceover**


**Music**


**B-Roll**

TIPS FOR GREAT VIDEOS

- Videos for social sharing need captioning because many people watch videos with the sound off.
- Don’t be afraid to experiment with Facebook Live, and don’t worry about the production value for Facebook videos. If the information is relevant, people will watch it.
- Videos can be successful if they are authentic and the information is compelling.
  —TONY LOMBARDO, Military Officers Association of America

- Find a story hook that captures the attention of the audience and go with it.
- Make sure the organization’s leadership supports the initiative. The more support and buy-in you have, the more creative freedom you’ll have. For those in the C-suite, don’t be afraid to take risks.
  —BEN ROME, American Industrial Hygiene Association

- Use simple sentences, get to the heart of the message quickly, and tell viewers why it matters.
- Develop a clear call to action and tell viewers why they should join the organization.
  —RACHEL BARTH, Military Officers Association of America

- Don’t worry about the product as much as you worry about the emotional content. It’s more about the script and the emotion conveyed. Share the video everywhere you can.
  —EMILY LIMON, Masons of California

AMERICAN INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE ASSOCIATION “I Am IH”

it generated 22,000 views, including 12,000 views on Facebook alone. Hardcover video books featuring a video screen were produced and given to high-value prospective donors during the campaign. The video took a month from start to finish and cost several thousand dollars to make. Although the organization has spent more time and budget on video production, they don’t believe it’s worthwhile. “Most association videos are not designed to be broadcast-quality productions,” Limon says. “It’s more about the script and the emotion conveyed.”

MEMORABLE MOMENTS

Ben Rome, marketing manager at the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA), agrees. “The audience won’t remember the entire video, but they will remember key phrases and moments, which are important in developing the video.” Drawing on his background as a video game designer, Rome develops a narrative and thinks about how the scene should look considering the setting and positioning of elements and the emotions that are elicited. When producing “I Am IH” (https://youtu.be/aZXp1171h7k), Rome told the professionals being filmed that they would be asked the same questions in different ways. “We’re working toward the ah-ha quote — that moment that captures the audience,” he says.

The series was developed as a resource to support member outreach efforts at job fairs and educational events that would...
capture the attention of students by showcasing the science and art of industrial hygiene in three-minute documentary clips. To produce the videos, AIHA put out a call to members who would be willing to be filmed on the job; they received 50 entries, which were pared down to three professionals. Over the next 14 months, Rome conducted phone interviews about what they do and how they entered the field of industrial hygiene, and then spent a day on the scene filming interviews and staging their jobs in action.

The biggest challenge was working with a subject’s company and securing permission to film the facility. To make a video featuring Tim Paz, an industrial hygienist who worked with the Architect of the Capitol (https://youtu.be/Caml6dLi21w), only a small area could be filmed due to the high security, and a minute-by-minute production plan that described exactly what would be filmed and where, including prepublication review of all footage, was required. “The result was truly worth it,” Rome says.

The biggest compliment came from a member who showed the video to his family and said they finally understood what he does for a living, Rome says, noting the many misconceptions of industrial hygienists. “Now, members are clamoring to be the next subject featured in the video series.”

**VIDEO TIERS**

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) not only produces videos on a wide range of topics for many different purposes, the organization also has three tiers of production quality. Short videos geared toward social media and longer, higher-quality videos are quickly produced in-house in a week or month. At the very highest level are broadcast-quality videos, complete with music, produced in collaboration with a production company.

“All three levels of video are important to our organization,” says Loren Barnett, CBF creative director.

One top-tier video is “The Incredible Oyster Reef” (https://youtu.be/9V3yjCpLc44), an eight-minute video that was a year in the making and was the centerpiece of the Chesapeake Oyster Alliance’s 10 Billion Oyster campaign for a clean Chesapeake Bay (www.chesapeakeoysteralliance.org). The award-winning video was the starting point in an ongoing communications campaign targeted to members, students, and advocates, and was designed to educate about the need for more oysters as well as advocate with a call-to-action to sign a petition or donate to the campaign.

Video production began by bringing together the president of the organization, in-house oyster scientists, and the development and communications staff. Together, the team brainstormed to develop a proposition and identify the objectives, goals, audiences, and messaging for the video.

A video-production contractor traveled to different oyster reefs to shoot footage. “The biggest obstacles were the weather and the talent,” Barnett says, citing the unpredictability of the water quality in the reefs, which attests to the need for more oysters, and the difficulty in getting the pufferfish to inflate inside the 550-gallon tank at the Maryland Oyster Restoration Center in Shady Side, Maryland. “We’ve had many requests to use the footage because it is very difficult to get,” Barnett says, noting that educational institutions, government organizations, and museums
around the world now use video segments in their educational efforts.

The film was entered into a dozen film contests that had a regional and environmental focus, such as the Annapolis Film Festival, the Environmental Film Festival in the Nation’s Capital, and the La Jolla, California, Film Festival, where it received awards. “There are so many kinds of festivals, and if you are careful in selecting the right ones, you can expect a good outcome,” Barnett says. “When a film is shown, it’s great exposure for the organization and the cause.”

**Room to Experiment**

At MOAA, videos are a key communications medium, says Tony Lombardo, director of audience engagement. “We are trying to integrate video into every discussion we have at our organization and into our overall communications strategy.”

A prolific producer of videos, MOAA set a goal to produce one or two videos each week, and everyone from the president on down is involved in the conversation. “Our leadership is really calling for this and helping to provide resources and ideas. It helps to have buy-in at the highest levels of the organization,” Lombardo says.

Videos are produced by marketing and communications department staff, who are cross-trained in video production skills from motion graphics to camera shoots. They implement a multipronged approach to produce videos that appeal to many different audience segments.

“The diversity of the videos we produce helps us reach more people,” says Lombardo, who noted that videos have helped the organization build a Facebook following of 85,000 members. “Our level of engagement is very high, and we outpace some of the larger organizations in this space by being socially friendly through video.”

Award-winning videos ([https://youtu.be/GYVX-zxIWDE](https://youtu.be/GYVX-zxIWDE)) previewed the Military Officer magazine story about the 2018 military movie, “Hunter Killer,” and featured an interview related to the film. Videos are also produced to highlight public policy initiatives and celebrate the birthdays of the service branches.

But it’s impossible to predict which video will go viral. The organization posted a video featuring raw footage of soldiers coming off a plane from Afghanistan who were greeted by fellow soldiers. As the video was shared, one soldier commented that he wished he had a similar experience, and as others added to this sentiment, the video went viral, generating several million views.

“We’ve been experimenting with video production, involving a lot of staff, and using motion graphics,” Lombardo says. “There’s lot of room to try new things with video.”

“However, we had no idea it would do so well,” he admits. “It speaks to the fact that video does not always need to have high production value, but it has to have a powerful image that resonates.”

Susan Boswell ([sboswell6@gmail.com](mailto:sboswell6@gmail.com)) founded Boswell Communications Consulting to provide writing, editing and magazine management to associations and organizations.