

Video Production Techniques for BLM Staff



A Step by Step Guide for Creating
Social Media Videos and Documentary Features for
Interpretation and Outreach

Video Production Techniques for BLM Staff



Videographer shooting outdoors

Course Description and Introduction

This five-module self-study course is designed to help BLM staff use portable digital video equipment to develop interpretive video for social media, web, exhibits, or outreach applications. While this course primarily focuses on the development of video projects to support interpretive objectives, many of the principles and production methods presented apply to video work in all BLM program areas.

What is interpretive video?

Interpretive video informs and inspires people through visuals and sound. It allows audiences to personally and meaningfully connect to sites and resources. In interpretive video, voices from the past can speak, otherwise inaccessible mountains can be climbed, and complex processes can be understood in a short time. Ultimately, a quality interpretive video tells a vivid story that allows diverse audiences to connect with their public lands.

How can interpretive video be used?

Interpretive video comes in a variety of different formats, from large-format surround-sound films to silent exhibit videos. For the purpose of this training course, interpretive video is defined as short- to medium-length video features about BLM resources.

Interpretive videos are used for social media purposes such as Facebook and YouTube, on websites, for outreach, at public meetings, and for internal training programs.*



Sony-HDR-CX560V - Handheld HD video cam

Because this course focuses on how to develop *interpretive* video, interpretation is emphasized throughout. Modules 1 and 2 cover interpretation and the basics for developing interpretive messages; Modules 3 through 6 cover preproduction, production, and postproduction video skills. We assume that most staff will utilize small digital cameras that record video on an internal hard drive. Since a number of preexisting cameras using digital videotape are still in use within the BLM, however, references to that technology are included.

****When developing interpretive media for any use, be it social media, web applications, or outreach to visitors and stakeholders, efforts must be made to coordinate with external affairs staff and management to ensure that all video packages obtain prerelease clearances, meet technical standards, and are compliant with all BLM and DOI standards, policies, and guidelines.***

Course Outline



Interpretive panel (1891 Schoolhouse)

Module 1 – Principles of Interpretation

A. What is Interpretation?

B. Why Interpret?

C. What Skills Do Interpreters Need?

D. How to Deliver Interpretive Services/Products



Videographer viewing interpretive panels

Module 2 – Pre Production

A. Developing Meaningful Video

B. Planning the Foundation

C. Strategizing the Project

D. Developing Content

E. Analyzing Interpretive Effectiveness

F. Identifying Production Locations

G. Identifying Interview Subjects

H. Writing a Draft Script or Treatment Outline

I. Scheduling Location Video Production and Interviews

J. Arranging for Local BLM Office Support

K. Making Travel Arrangements

L. Preparing Equipment



Videographer shooting interpretive panel (1891 Schoolhouse)

Module 3 – Production

A. Learning Basic Videography Techniques

B. Learning Basic Audio Recording Techniques

C. Staging & Conducting Video Interviews

D. B-Roll: What Is It & How to Shoot It?

E. Tips and Tricks for BLM Video Work

F. Shooting an Interpretive Lecture or Other Event

G. Caring for Equipment

H. Safety



Recording VO script

Module 4 – Postproduction Preparation

A. Logging Location Recordings

B. Telling a Story with Television

C. Choosing Sound Bites

D. Choosing Visuals

E. Designing & Preparing Graphics

F. Writing & Recording Voiceover Narration

G. Preparing the Final Script for a Video Editor



Working with an editor

Module 5 – The Video Edit Process

A. Importing or Digitizing Original Footage

B. Recording Voiceovers

C. Building an Initial Timeline

D. Adding Music Tracks

E. Adding B-Roll, Text, and Graphics

F. Creating Visual Montages

G. Adding Titles, Credits, and Logos

H. Reviewing the First Cut

I. Executing the Final Edit

J. Setting Final Audio Levels

K. Rendering and Encoding

L. Burning DVDs

M. Managing Media

****** Information contained in Modules 1 and 2 has been extrapolated and used with the permission of Indiana University's Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands.***